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AN ARGUMENT

FOR THE

PERPETUITY OF THE SABBATH.



BY REV. A. A. PHELPS.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE following Argument in defence of the Sabbath was called forth by the discussions of the late "Church, Ministry, and Sabbath Convention," so termed, in this city. A wish has been repeatedly expressed that it should be written out for publication. This has been done — but amid a pressure of other duties which has subjected the author to frequent interruptions, much consequent delay, and some serious disadvantages in its accomplishment. In writing it out, some trains of thought have been introduced which were not presented in the Convention, and some, which were then merely hinted at, have been carried out. The Argument differs from the ordinary discussions of the subject, in that its strength is mainly expended on two points, which, in the author's judgment, are usually despatched

too summarily, and therefore not satisfactorily, but which, after all, are the strong points of the case on the part of our opponents. Those points are, first, *their* argument to prove that the Sabbath was originally instituted in the wilderness; and, second, *our* argument to prove a divine warrant for the change of the day. To make the truth on these points clear, has been a leading design in the ensuing discussion. The Argument, such as it is, is now given to the public, in the hope that it may help to satisfy the inquiring, to relieve the doubting, to decide the wavering, to confirm the weak, and to promote in all a more intelligent and better observance of the LORD'S DAY.

THE AUTHOR.

*Boston, Feb. 12, 1841.*

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# THE SABBATH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

**THE SABBATH**—This is the topic in discussion. But what is the question at issue in respect to it? Till this is ascertained, we can make no progress in the discussion. I will attempt to state it. And first, I will state what it is not.\*

1. It is not whether men ought to be holy every day; to have "Holiness to the Lord" written on all they have and are; to carry their religion into their business, so as to make their business part of their religion, and do all they do to the glory of God, and in this sense keep all days holy; for in this, the friends and the opponents of the Sabbath are agreed. At all events, no friends of the Sabbath deny it. True, their opponents sometimes say they do. Nay, they even insist, at times, that their zeal for the observance of one day in seven, as holy, is virtually that they may have the freer license to sin during the remainder of the week. But it is not so. Such repre-

\* The arguments noticed in this chapter were all urged in the Convention.

sentations are injurious and false. What friend of the Sabbath, if a minister, does not preach that men ought to be holy every day and every where, as well as on the Sabbath and in the sanctuary? And when he urges the observance of one day in seven as a Sabbath, who is there, be he minister or layman, that does not do it, in order that, by carrying its hallowing instructions and influences with them into the ordinary avocations of life, men may be led to serve God in *them* as well as in their religious duties, and so be made the more holy, rather than the less so, during the other six days of the week? And who, that knows any thing of a real observance of the Sabbath, does not know by experience, that such are its actual tendency and effect? Or if, in any case, the tendency and effect of its observance seem otherwise, and men do cast its restraints behind them, and take occasion from it to sin the more the moment they enter on the week, who are they that do it? The men that honestly advocate and keep the Sabbath, or those only that play the hypocrite in regard to it? The men to whom the Sabbath is a delight, and the holy of the Lord honorable, or those to whom it is a yoke, and a "burden," and a curse, and who *in their hearts wish there were none*? The latter, plainly. Be this, however, as it may, the question at issue between the friends and opponents of the Sabbath is not whether men ought to serve God always and every where, and so keep all days holy, — for this the friends of the Sabbath most fully believe and teach, — but whether keeping all days holy, forbids the setting apart of one day in seven as a Sabbath; i. e. as a day of rest from the ordinary avocations of life, and of special de-

votion to the duties of religion. And to pretend this, is to say that setting apart particular times to particular duties, so that those duties may be the more orderly and profitably discharged, is inconsistent with keeping all time holy; whereas, in point of fact, it may be, and is, only a more effectual, as well as common sense arrangement for this very end.

2. The question touching the Sabbath is not whether Christ taught a higher and purer morality than Moses and the prophets. That he did, I know, is claimed. It is said in terms, that "the standard of morality under the gospel dispensation is infinitely higher than it was under the old;" and the inference is, that the Sabbath is therefore now set aside. But the *fact* asserted admits of question — much more the inference. When one (Matt. xxii. 36—40) came to Christ with the inquiry, "Master, which is the great commandment of the law," his answer was, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it — Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." And then he added, "*On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets*" — a plain declaration, that these two great requirements of supreme love to God and impartial love to man, covering, as they do, the whole field of obligation and duty, are not the revelation of a new and higher standard, unknown to Moses and the prophets, but a summary only of what they themselves had taught. Indeed, so true is this, that, on another occasion, (Matt. vii. 12,) when Christ gave his disciples that golden rule, which in its wide sweep comprehends all obligation

and duty, — “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,” — so far from telling them that herein he gave them a higher and purer standard of morality than that of Moses and the prophets, he adds emphatically, “*For this IS the law and the prophets*” — nothing older and nothing newer, nothing more and nothing less, but the same identical thing itself. If Christ’s testimony, then, is to be received, he did not reveal nor enjoin a higher or a purer morality than did Moses and the prophets. Of course the Sabbath is not to be set aside on this ground.

But admit, if you will, that he did reveal a new and higher morality, still the inference of no Sabbath does not follow ; for the question is, not whether Christ taught a higher and purer morality than Moses and the prophets, but did he teach one so high and so pure as to set aside the Sabbath? Admit it to be as elevated and pure as purity itself, does it therefore follow that to set apart one day in seven as a Sabbath, — i. e. as a day of rest from the ordinary avocations of life, and of special devotion to the duties of religion, — is no longer obligatory or proper? To say so, brings us to the old absurdity again, viz. that to appropriate particular times to particular duties, for the sake of their more orderly and profitable discharge, is inconsistent with keeping all time holy, or, what is the same, with the purity of the gospel ; or that it is at best a needless and profitless arrangement. And this is an absurdity so glaring that anti-Sabbath men themselves do not, and cannot, practise on it, — except in their religion. For they, as well as others, have their general arrangement of one time



for the duties of the family, another for the duties of the farm, or the workshop, or the printing-office, and so on through the whole circle of regularly-returning duties. And can it be, that it is in religion only, that the appropriation of a particular time to particular duties is a needless and profitless arrangement, inconsistent alike with keeping all time holy, and with the elevated purity of the gospel — nay, a “burden” and a “yoke,” from which Christ came to deliver us? By no means. Elevated and pure as is the morality Christ taught, it does not follow that it is so pure as to annihilate or set aside the observance of one day in seven as a Sabbath, or day of holy rest. That remains to be proved, not taken for granted.

3. The question touching the Sabbath is not whether the law, or Sinai covenant, is done away in Christ, or in the gospel, or new covenant; for in this the friends and opponents of the Sabbath are agreed. But it is, in what sense is the one done away by the other? Is it so done away as to set aside the Sabbath? That is the question. (1.) Is it done away as a means of justification? Agreed. “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight,” (Rom. iii. 20.) That, however, does not touch the question of the observance of the Sabbath as a *duty*. The law, though not binding as a rule of justification, may be as a rule of duty, so that it may still be as much my duty to keep the Sabbath as it is to worship God. (2.) Is it, then, done away in Christ as a rule of duty? It is so asserted; but what saith the apostle? — “Do we, then, make void the law” (as a rule of duty) “through faith?” (as the rule of justification.) (v. 28.) “God

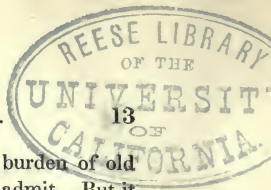
forbid. Yea, we ESTABLISH the law." Such is Paul's opinion. And why, indeed, should he have any other? What room is there for pardon or justification where there is no sin to be pardoned? And what sin can there be where there is no law, or existing obligation to be violated? And what law is there when the law is done away?

But admit that the law, as a rule of duty, is done away; are we, then, no longer bound to love God or man, to abstain from idolatry, blasphemy, false witness, theft, adultery, murder, and the like? Are we absolved from obligation in respect to these matters as well as that of the Sabbath? This is not pretended. But it is said that obligation, in these cases, is unchanging, growing out of the very nature, necessities, and relations of man, and that, therefore, we are, in respect to them, "under law to Christ." Be it so. And how does it appear that we are not equally "under law to Christ" to keep the Sabbath? This, at least, is the question; and is a thing to be proved, not taken for granted.

4. The question at issue is not whether the rites and ceremonies of the old economy were a shadow of good things to come, and are all fulfilled in Christ. For in this we are all agreed. But it is whether the Sabbath, any more than the marriage institution, or the command to honor parents, or every other command of the decalogue, was a part of that shadow, and therefore done away in Christ, the substance. All agree that the shadow is done away; but was the Sabbath a part of it? That is the question, and is a matter to be proved, not assumed.

5. The question at issue is not whether Christ





PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

came to deliver us from the yoke and burden of old rites and ceremonies; for this, too, all admit. But it is, whether the Sabbath, any more than the marriage institution, or the command to worship and serve God, was a part of that burden and yoke? True, it is so claimed. The Sabbath, so far from being regarded as a "delight," is set down by some as a burden, from whose intolerable pressure it was one great object of Christ to deliver us. All this, however, is but begging the question. What proof is there that the Sabbath was a part of that burden? To assume it, and then infer, that because the burden is done away, the Sabbath is, is assumption, and nothing more. With the same propriety you may assume that marriage was a part of the burden, and then gravely infer, that, the burden being done away, marriage is done away too. The logic — if logic it can be called — is as good in one case as in the other. Indeed, as a matter of fact, some who have applied it to the Sabbath first, have afterwards applied it to the marriage institution, and insisted, that "it is only in the view of the mind, and after the fashion of the world, that a person has any more right over a woman, after a certain ceremony is performed, than before" — that "God is about to put an end to all such mock, sham, and fictitious rights" — that the parties "ought to be left free to separate from each other; else what is the use to talk about people's having rights, seeing they are not allowed to exercise any in a matter the most important to their peace and welfare of any other, but are bond slaves?"\* — that "the righteous-

\* Battle Axe, p. 19.

ness of the saints will cause those that possess it for the first time to love their neighbor as themselves, and act in accordance with such love in all things," and that, so acting, "what one has is to another as his own. All things are common in the fullest sense of the words — wives and every thing else. No part of the price is kept back. None are suffered to want while another abounds."\* — And that "when the will of God is done on earth, as it is in heaven, *there will be no marriage*. The marriage supper of the Lamb is a feast, at which *every dish is free to every guest*."†

Such sentiments shock us. They shock, too, it is believed, the great body of those who reject the Sabbath. Indeed, so manifestly do they "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness," that we can scarcely persuade ourselves that they are seriously entertained by any. And yet it is notorious that they are. These, and worse than these, are the sentiments of the spiritual or no-marriage Perfectionists. It is equally notorious that the same processes of assumption and inference, and the same reasonings about burdens, and shadows, and entering into rest and the liberty of Christ, &c. &c., which lead the one to the rejection of the Sabbath, the church, and the ministry, lead the other, and logically too, to the rejection of Sabbath, ordinances, church, ministry, marriage, Bible and all. Starting at the same point, and pursuing the same processes of reasoning, the one stop with the rejection of the Sabbath, the ministry, and the church, the others rush headlong, yet logically, to results that, under the garb of Christianity, strip Christianity of her essential elements, and make Christ little else

\* Battle Axe, p. 13.

† Ibid. p. 10.

than a minister of sin. I repeat it, then, the question at issue in respect to the Sabbath, is not, whether the burden of old rites and ceremonies is done away, but is the Sabbath a part of it? And this is a thing to be proved, not assumed.

6. The question is not whether it is our privilege and duty to have peace and joy in believing; to enter into rest; to become freemen in Christ Jesus; to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ maketh free, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage, &c. &c.; for all this the friends of the Sabbath most fully believe and teach. But the question is, whether this peace, and joy, and rest, and liberty, are the peace, and joy, and rest, and liberty, of doing without a Sabbath. That is the question.

7. And finally, the question is not whether the letter (2 Cor. iii. 6—11) killeth while the spirit giveth life; nor whether the Jewish dispensation is done away by the Christian; nor whether the Christian is so much more glorious than the other as to eclipse and throw it into the shade; for this, too, is clearly taught in the passage quoted and fully believed by the friends of the Sabbath. But the question is whether the Christian dispensation is so glorious as to dispense with the Sabbath. And this, as in all the other cases, is a matter to be proved, not assumed. Let it be well considered, then, that the inferences so confidently drawn to the non-existence of the Sabbath, from the several premises now noticed, are, after all, mere assumptions. Of course they are all to be set aside at the outset, as having nothing to do with the question really at issue. This done, we may profitably proceed with the discussion.

## CHAPTER II.

### EXPLANATION OF TERMS.

IN the discussion of every subject, much depends on a correct explanation or definition of terms. It is so in the present case. Some really seem to suppose that the friends of the Sabbath regard one day as *intrinsically* more holy than another, and that when they use the terms *sacred*, *sanctified*, *holy*, and *Sabbath*, they do it with such an understanding of them. But is it so? Learning, as they do, all they know of the Sabbath from the Bible, it is but fair to suppose that they use these terms in the same sense that the Bible does. What, then, is the Bible use of them?

1. *Sanctified*. This, in the Mosaic use of it, denotes, among other things, "set apart specially to sacred or religious purposes." Thus (Lev. viii. 10—12) we are told that Moses took the anointing oil, and anointed the tabernacle, and all that was therein, and "*sanctified*" them; and sprinkled the altar and all his vessels, to "*sanctify*" them — not that the materials of which these things were made were intrinsically more holy than the same materials wrought into other vessels; nor that the vessels themselves were made intrinsically more holy by this act of consecration; but only that they were thus set apart specially and exclusively to the services of religion. In like manner, also, "he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's

head, and anointed him, to *sanctify* him ;” i. e. to set him apart to the services of religion — not that he was thereby made intrinsically more holy than before. In the same sense, when they came up out of Egypt, the Israelites were commanded (Ex. xiii. 2) to “sanctify,” or (v. 12) “set apart unto the Lord,” all the first-born of man and beast — the beasts for sacrifice and the men for the religious services of the altar and the temple. In Joel also (i. 14 ; ii. 15) the priests are called upon to “sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly,” &c. ; i. e. obviously, to appoint or set apart a time for that religious service. And in the same sense, beyond all question, it is said, (Gen. ii. 3,) “God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it ;” i. e. set it apart specially to religious purposes.

2. *Holy*. This is used in the same sense with the term *sanctified*. Thus the “holy garments” (Ex. xxviii. 2) of Aaron and his sons are not garments intrinsically more holy than others, but merely garments made and set apart specially for the religious services of the altar and temple. So, when it is said, (Ex. xvi. 23,) “To-morrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath,” the meaning is, not that the morrow is intrinsically more holy than any other day, but that it is the day set apart from the ordinary avocations of life to the purposes of religious rest, improvement, and worship. Literally translated, the passage reads, “To-morrow is the rest, the rest holy (*Sabbath-quo-des*) unto the Lord.” And this gives you its true meaning, viz. To-morrow is the rest, the rest that is holy ; i. e. consecrated, or set apart to the Lord. So, in the account of the original institution of the Sabbath, (Gen. ii. 3,) the term which is translated



*sanctified* is *yekaddesh*, and means, literally, he caused it to be holy; i. e. he hallowed or set it apart to the purposes of religion.

3. *Sabbath*. This term, in view of what has just been said, is readily understood. Literally, it means merely *rest*. Applied to a particular period of time set apart as holy, as of a day, it means a day set apart to rest from the ordinary avocations of life, and specially devoted to the duties of religious instruction, improvement, and worship. The Sabbath, then, as an institution, is a season of rest, holy or consecrated to the Lord. It consists of two parts, the Sabbath or holy rest, and the time or day set apart for it. This distinction is clearly recognized in the account of its original institution. God (Gen. ii. 2) rested (sabbatized) on the seventh day; and then (v. 3) he "sanctified," or set that day apart, as the day for sabbatizing, "because that in it *he* had rested," (sabbatized.) The sabbatizing or holy resting is therefore one thing; the particular day set apart for it is another. The particular day may therefore be changed, as from the seventh to the first day of the week, and yet the institution itself, as a season of holy rest consecrated to the services of religion, remain unchanged.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE SABBATH AT CREATION.

THE question, then, or rather questions, at issue in this discussion, are these — 1. Is the Sáb bath, as an institution, perpetually binding on men? 2. Has any particular day been set apart, by divine appointment, for its observance? and if so, what day is it?

IS THE SABBATH PERPETUALLY BINDING ON MEN?

It will be my object to show that it is.

1. Its perpetual obligation is manifest from its original institution. Like marriage, it was instituted at creation, and instituted, not for the Jew alone, nor for the Greek, nor for any particular age or nation, but for *man* — *the race*; to live, therefore, like the marriage institution, while the race, in its present state of being, lives; and to be binding in its observance, while there is such a race to observe it. This is manifest from the inspired record. According to that, the first period of creation (Gen. i. 1—5) brought forth the shapeless mass of chaos, and separated the darkness from the light, and gave being to Day and Night. The second (vs. 6—8) gave the firmament, and separated the waters which were beneath from those which were above it. The third (vs. 9—13) gathered the waters that were under the firmament into seas, brought forth the earth, clothed it with the tender grass, and the herb, and tree, and made it in-



instinct every where with vegetable life and beauty. The fourth (vs. 14—19) studded the firmament with greater and lesser lights, to divide the day from the night, and to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years. The fifth (vs. 20—23) filled the sea and air with their appropriate inhabitants, and made them instinct with animal life in all its myriad forms. The sixth (vs. 24—31) peopled the earth with every living creature, each after his kind; gave man his being, in the image of God, and male and female; then blessed, and bade him multiply, and replenish and subdue the earth, and invested him with dominion over bird, and beast, and fish, and herb, and tree. Thus was creation ended. The great arrangements of day and night, of earth and seas, of seasons and years; of vegetable and animal life, pervading earth, and sea, and air; of man in the conjugal relationship, ("male and female created he them,") multiplying and replenishing the earth, and swaying the sceptre of dominion over all,—these arrangements were all completed. Nor will it be pretended that these were not, each and all, *permanent* in their character, and made originally, as they are now continued, not for man of any particular age or nation, but *for man—the race*.

But there was one arrangement not completed. True, creation's work was done. Existence, in all its varied forms of beauty and of life, and up through all its myriad ranks to man, the image of his God and head of all, was thrown from its Creator's hand. And it was all very good. But how should this fair world, or man the head of it, be kept in fond remembrance of its Author? how made to move in

sweet attraction and harmony divine around its great Original? Man, the race, needed one arrangement more — a something, that, at regular and oft-returning periods, should stop him in the busy whirl of life, and lift his thoughts to Him that gave, and, without ceasing, was to give to him, and all things else, their being and their all. What should that arrangement be? And (Gen. ii. 2, 3) “God rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, because that in it he had rested from all his work.” That gave the desired arrangement. God rested on the seventh day from his creating work, and dwelt in sweet complacency and holy joy on all that he had made. It was all “*very good* ;” and in holy contemplation of it, holy satisfaction filled his mind — God *felt satisfied*. “On the seventh day (Ex. xxxi. 17) he rested and was *refreshed*.” And *because* HE rested then and was refreshed, he set that day apart for man, that, at each returning seventh period, he and his might rest from their six days’ work, as God had done from his, and, resting, lift their thoughts in fond remembrance and holy joy to God, their Maker, and be, (Ex. xxiii. 12,) like him, “refreshed.” The one was manifestly the reason or occasion of the other. God rested and was refreshed on that day. *Therefore* he blessed and “sanctified,” or set it apart, not for himself, plainly, but for man to rest and be alike refreshed. Nor was it for one age or nation merely, but for man in every age and every where. And being so, it was the arrangement needed, and fitted to hold the world in fond remembrance and sweet attraction to its Maker’s throne. It was the

arrangement with which the circle of great and permanent arrangements for man in the morning of his being was complete, and without which that circle was marvellously incomplete. Can there, then, be doubt that, in accordance with the obvious and literal import of the divine record, the Sabbath was instituted, by God, at creation, and as an arrangement for the race, not for any particular portion of it? Were not all the other arrangements, made and instituted at creation, made and instituted for the race? Was not the arrangement of day and night for man — the race? of earth and seas, for man — the race? of seasons and years, for man — the race? Of vegetable and animal life, pervading earth, air, and sea; of man, in the conjugal relationship, or social state, multiplying, and replenishing and subduing the earth; of man, wielding dominion over all the lower creation, — were not all these arrangements made and instituted for man — the race? Why, then, should the arrangement of the Sabbath be an exception? Plainly it was not. It was instituted when they were instituted, and, like them, was designed to be as universal in its existence, and as perpetual in its obligation, as the race itself. Nay, it was the crowning arrangement of all. *They* looked rather to the welfare of the *natural and the mortal* of man; this to the *spiritual and immortal* of him.

*Objection.* But geology, it is said, has proved beyond a doubt, that the days spoken of in the history of creation, were not such periods of twenty-four hours as we are familiar with, and which we now call days, but long and indefinite periods of time — periods of a thousand years or more; and therefore that it is ab-

surd to speak of God's resting the seventh day, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, and then setting apart that day as a period of similar rest to man.

*Answer.* This objection, to have *any* force, must assume, what some geologists do not maintain,—(1.) that *all* of the seven days in question were such long and indefinite periods, and (2.) that the last three, whether longer or shorter, were not made up of such days, weeks, &c., as we are now familiar with. Should it be admitted that the last three days (which were the days following the creation of the sun "to rule the day") were days of the ordinary length, the objection fails. Or, should it be admitted that these last days, though themselves long and indefinite periods, were made up, as such periods would be now, of ordinary days, weeks, &c., then also the objection equally fails. For in both cases, the day that God blessed and sanctified, as he did it for man, and not for himself, would be the ordinary day with which man was, and was to be, familiar. Meeting the objection, then, on the ground that it does and must assume, in order to have any force, I remark,

1. Beasts and men were created on the sixth day. As man was made male and female, it is but fair to suppose that his creation occupied at least one half the time. And has geology proved that God was some five hundred years or more making man?

2. The seventh day was, of course, man's first whole day upon the earth. And has geology proved that man's first whole day was a thousand or more years long? and this, while it freely admits, in agreement with the inspired record, that each of his after days consisted of only twenty-four hours?

3. But be it that geology has proved all it claims of the first four periods or days; has it proved the same of the three remaining periods? Has it proved that, *after* God had made the lights "to divide the day from the night, and to be for signs and for seasons, and for days and years," — the sun "to rule the day," and the moon "to rule the night," — and "set them in the firmament," and bade them do their work, — they did not do it then *as* they do it now? Has it proved that the same heavenly bodies that now rule the days into periods of twenty-four hours each, and the years into periods of three hundred sixty-five days each, and regulate the seasons accordingly, did not rule the days and years, and regulate the seasons, in the same manner, and in obedience to the same laws, then? Is it indeed so, that these same heavenly bodies, with their fixed and unchanging laws of attraction, were a thousand years or more in doing then what they now do in twenty-four hours? And geology proved it! and, proving that, turned astronomer, and proved also that, far backward in the lapse of time, by some sudden shift or process gradual, the laws that govern the entire planetary system have all been changed, and so changed that results which used to be the product of a millenary of years are now the product of a few short hours! Nay, verily, geology may adjust her difficulties with the Bible about the meaning of a term; but can she adjust the controversy between herself and Astronomy? Can she tell Astronomy when, and where, and how, the laws of the planetary system were so changed? At what point of time, by what slow or sudden shift was it, that these mighty worlds (or the



earth as governed by them) were quickened in their flight, and made to do the work of a thousand years or more within the limits of a few short hours? Will geology, or the objector, answer this?—Moreover,

4. Does not the whole argument from geology rest on *mere assumption*? True, the word “day,” as used in the Mosaic account, will bear the construction put on it by geology; but on one condition only. Like every other word, it is always to be understood in its common and proper acceptance, unless there be something in the connection in which it is used, or in the nature of the subject, to forbid it. In that case, and that only, it must be understood in some other sense; and in what sense, the connection, or nature of the subject, or both together, must determine. Now, it is admitted that the geological sense of “an age,” or “a long, indefinite period of time,” is not the common and proper import of the term. Professor Silliman says,\* “It is agreed on all hands, that the Hebrew word here used for ‘day,’ although frequently used for time, usually signified a period of twenty-four hours.” And it is obvious, and admitted too, that there is nothing in the *connection* in which the term is used in this case to demand a different signification. It is the *nature of the subject* alone that is supposed to demand it. But how does this do it? Only in this way—“Here are certain geological results; *if* these were produced by the same causes operating according to the same laws as at present, they could not have been produced in twenty four hours, but must have been the

\* Suggestions relative to the Philosophy of Geology, &c., p. 107.

product of a series of years. Hence the nature of the case compels us to put such construction on the term in question." True, *if* they were so produced. But what right has geology to *assume* this? That she does assume it, is plain. Thus Professor S. says,\* "Although the materials (of the earth) were created by almighty Power, they were evidently left to the operation of physical laws" in the production of the various results. Hence,† "by surveying the causes that are *still* in full operation, the geological events that are *now* in progress, and the effects that are proceeding without impediment or delay, we *thus discover*, that since the creation, as regards *geological causes*, all things remain as they were; *no new code of physical laws has been enacted.*" In this way, and this only, geology gets at her argument from the nature of the case. Arguing from the present to the past, she first *assumes* that "no new code of physical laws has been enacted" for the operation of "geological causes," and then *infers* that geological events or effects which are the product of an age now were so at creation, and, therefore, that "day" in the Mosaic account must mean, not day in the ordinary sense, but an age, or long series of years. Nay, to meet certain Scripture difficulties, and sustain herself in this inference, she modestly *suggests* that a new code of physical laws has been enacted to govern the action of *astronomical* causes, though not of geological. Her language is,‡ "As already suggested, the sun not being ordained to rule the day until the fourth of those periods, it is not certain that even after this

\* Suggestions, &amp;c. p. 41.

† Ibid. p. 86.

‡ Ibid. p. 110.



epoch, *those early revolutions of the earth on its axis were as rapid as now* ; for these might cease altogether, or be greatly increased in rapidity, without affecting the planetary relations of the earth with the sun and with the other members of the system."

But what right has geology to all these assumptions? Surely, "by surveying the (astronomical) causes that are *still* in full operation, the (astronomical) events that are *now* in progress, and the (astronomical) effects that are proceeding without impediment or delay, we *thus discover*, that since the creation, as regards (astronomical) causes, all things remain as they were ; *no new code of physical laws has been enacted.*" And the discovery is surely as real in this case as in the other ; and, being real, what becomes of the inference about the meaning of the term "day," after the fourth period of creation? And if geology may suggest such a change in the physical laws that govern the planetary system, and work out its astronomical results, why may not criticism suggest a similar change in the laws which regulate the action of geological causes in the production of their results? And if she makes it, how can geology disprove it? Here are certain geological results or effects that have come down to us from creation. Can geology prove that they are the product of the same causes as produce such results now? or, that those causes, if the same, operated according to the same laws then as now? How knows she that they may not have been the product of causes which, acting with creative energy, and having done their work as such, have now become extinct, or given place to other causes, the same in

kind, if you will, but of different energy — causes that now act only with *sustaining*, not *creative* energy? Why may not geological causes, having accomplished their great end as creative causes, have lost as much of their original energy and rapidity of production, as she herself supposes astronomical causes to have gained? And in that event, why may not results which would be now the product of an age, have been then the product of a day?

Does geology tell us that the *nature* of the results is such as to preclude such a supposition? that “the crystals and crystallized rocks, the entombed remains of animals and vegetables, from entire trees to lichens, fuci, and ferns, from the minutest shell-fish and microscopic animalculæ to gigantic reptiles,” &c., forbid it? in a word, that these results all *look* as if they were the product of long periods, just as now? Be it so. But suppose that among some of these ancient remains (pardon the supposition) Adam and Eve should be found; would they not *look* as if they were made and grew up to maturity just as men and women now do? But was it so? Were the “materials created by almighty Power,” and then “evidently left to the operation of physical laws” in the production of them? And if not, how will geology prove it so in regard to beasts, or birds, or fish, or reptiles, or rocks? Why may not these have been flung from their Creator’s hand *full grown*, as well as man? Does geology say God does not make these things so now? Nor does he make man so now. And if the manner of making them now is decisive of the manner of making them then, why is not the same true of the manner of

making man then? Does geology say, that, from the necessity of the case, man must, in the first instance, be made full grown? And how does it appear that, from the same cause, every order of existence, animate and inanimate, must not also, at the first, be so made? And what, then, becomes of the argument from geological remains?

These questions are not intended to ridicule the geological argument, nor to say that it is without foundation, but only to show that it has its difficulties, and that these are such and so many as to forbid its being used very flippantly to disprove the institution of the Sabbath at creation.

But, 5. Admit all that geology claims, and still the objection is not valid. For, were the periods of creation longer or shorter, geology does not deny that they were periods of time, and that they were so far equal and regularly-returning periods, as to be fitly represented by the regularly-returning days with which we are familiar. And this admitted, the whole force of the objection is gone. For, be the period in which God rested and was refreshed, a longer or a shorter one, it was the seventh period from the commencement of creation. It answered to, and is fitly represented by, the shorter yet seventh day, with which man, the race, is and has been familiar, if not at the outset, yet through all the subsequent generations of his being. When God therefore rested on his or creation's seventh period of time, and then, on that account, sanctified or set apart the seventh day for a similar rest to man, he set apart that period with which man, as a race, was, or was to be, familiar; and which was, or was to be, to man, just what his

own seventh period had been to himself. If the two periods were not then of the same identical length, the one was at least the fit representative of the other, and man, in resting on the one, was furnished with a fit emblem and a sweet memorial of God resting from his work of creation on the other. Such a setting apart or sanctification of each returning seventh day, as a day of holy rest for man, from the creation downward, was therefore alike significant and proper.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE SABBATH IN THE PATRIARCHAL AGE.

THE Bible, it is said, "contains no example of any man keeping a Sabbath before the time of Moses;"\* nor does it in any way make mention of a Sabbath from the creation to the giving of manna in the wilderness—a period of two thousand five hundred years; and how could this be, if it were during all that period an existing institution?†

This objection is made up of two parts, a fact asserted, and an inference from it. The fact asserted is, that no mention is made of a Sabbath during the period in question; the inference is, therefore, at that time, there was no Sabbath.

1. Suppose we admit the fact asserted; does the inference follow? By no means. For, (1.) the history of that whole period is given in a single book and twelve chapters of another. If, then, there be no mention of the Sabbath in a history so brief, it is not surprising, nor is it any proof that it did not exist. But, (2.) the Sabbath is mentioned only five times in the Jewish Scriptures, prophetic and historical both, from the time of Moses to the return of the captivity

\* Grew, p. 3.

† The argument, substantially, of Paley and all that class of writers.



—a period of one thousand years; twice in prophecy, and three times in history. And, (3.) in the entire histories of Joshua, of the Judges, of Samuel, and of Saul, — a period of about five hundred years, — the Sabbath is not mentioned once. Had they no Sabbath, then? (4.) From Joshua to Jeremiah, a period of eight hundred years, not one word is said of circumcision. Had they no circumcision, then? In all these cases, the history is much more minute and full than in the other. If the silence of the record is conclusive in the one case, it is more so in the others. But is it conclusive? Were the Jews without a Sabbath from Joshua to David — a period of five hundred years? And without circumcision from Joshua to Jeremiah — a period of eight hundred? By no means. Moreover, Noah, we are told, (2 Pet. ii. 5,) was “a preacher of righteousness.” But we have no record of what he preached. Did he therefore preach nothing? But,

2. I deny the fact asserted. It is not true that there is no mention of the Sabbath during the period in question. What are the facts? We find at first a distinct record of its original institution, with the reasons for it, — a record as distinct as is that of the institution of marriage. Nor, from the *record* merely, is there any reason, in the one case more than in the other, to suppose that it is the record of an institution first established two thousand five hundred years after creation. So far as the record goes, it is in both cases the clear record of institutions established at creation. At the outset, then, the mention is distinct and clear. And being so, it is manifest that, subsequently, in so brief a history, we ought to ex-



pect only incidental allusions to it, if any, or such existing facts and occurrences as are in harmony with the supposition of its existence. And if we find such facts and occurrences or allusions, it is plain that we not only have a mention, but all the mention of its existence which the case requires. Nay, if these incidental allusions, and these existing facts and occurrences, are just what we should expect them to be on the supposition of a Sabbath, so that the theory or supposition of a Sabbath affords the only or even the *better* solution of their existence than any other, then in this fact we have the mention and the proof that the Sabbath was. And we have all the proof that science has that the sun is in the centre of the solar system. For it is only on the ground that the theory or supposition of the sun's being in the centre of the system affords, not the only, but a *better* solution merely of existing and occurring facts than any other theory, that science, with a Newton at its head, declares that to be the true theory, and summons the assent of the scientific world to the correctness of its decision. And why shall not the same proof, if it exist, be equally valid here? Does such proof exist? That is the question now before us.

(1.) On the supposition of a Sabbath, we should expect to find the patriarchs meeting together *at stated times* for religious worship. Accordingly, the first distinct record of religious worship is, (Gen. iv. 3,) that "in process of time," or, literally, "at the end of days," Cain and Abel brought their respective offerings to the Lord. And the fair and obvious import of the record is, that they did this as a matter of course,

when the *regular* or *stated* time for it came round. The next record (Gen. iv. 26) is, that at the birth of Enos, when his father, Seth, was one hundred and five years old, "began men to call upon the name of the Lord." What was this but public, social worship? The writer surely does not mean to inform us that there was no family worship before. For we have the record of that in the offerings of Cain and Abel. Nor can he mean to say that there was no private worship—that Adam and the pious Seth never prayed until the birth of Enos; i. e. until Seth was one hundred and five years old, and Adam two hundred and thirty-five. Surely Adam and Seth did not live all that time without private prayer. What can the passage mean, then, but that when Enos was born,—i. e. as soon as men began to multiply,—they then began to call on God in a public, social way? But such worship must have had its mutually-agreed upon, or divinely-appointed *stated* times. How else could it have been conducted?\*

\* Since the sitting of the Convention, I have solicited the opinion of Professor Stuart, of Andover, concerning the proper translation and interpretation of several passages used in the discussion. The following is his view of the passage above:—

"Gen. iv. 26, 'Then began men to call,' etc., or, 'Then was a commencement made of calling,' etc., is rightly translated. The phrase, *לְקַרָּא בְשֵׁם יְהוָה* (*liqra beshem Yehovah*), means, *invocation upon the name of God*, and this in a *social* and *public* manner. (Compare Gen. xii. 8; xiii. 4; xxi. 33; xxvi. 25. Ps. cv. 1. Is. xii. 4; xli. 25.) It can mean neither less nor more here, as I think, than that public *social* worship then commenced, i. e. so soon as men began to multiply. The writer does not mean to intimate that the pious Seth did not *pray*, before his son was born to him; what can he intimate but social worship? *When*—is not said."

Further, in the subsequent history, we find that whenever the patriarchs pitched their tents with a view to dwelling for any length of time in a place, they *always built an altar there for public worship*. When Noah came out of the ark, (Gen. vii. 20,) the first thing was to "build an altar unto the Lord," and offer sacrifice. When Abraham originally entered Canaan, at his first stopping place, (Gen. xii. 7,) "there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him." When he removed, (Gen. xii. 8,) and "pitched his tent" at a second place, "there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord." On his return from Egypt, whither he had gone on account of a famine, he sojourned a season in Abimelech's country, and then came (Gen. xiii. 3, 4) to Bethel, "unto the place of the altar which he had made there at the first; and there he called on the name of the Lord." When, on his separation from Lot, (Gen. xiii. 18,) he "removed his tent, and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, he built there an altar unto the Lord." Subsequently, (Gen. xxi. 33, and xxii. 19,) when he "dwelt at Beersheba," he made a similar arrangement for public worship there. The other patriarchs did the same. When Isaac (Gen. xxvi. 6, 25) "dwelt in Gerar," he "builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord." When Jacob (Gen. xxxiii. 18, 20) "pitched his tent" before Shalem, "he erected there an altar, and called it God, the God of Israel." When, in that residence, some of his family (Gen. xxxv. 1—6) had fallen in with the surrounding idolatry, God directed him to go up to Bethel, and "dwell there, and make there an altar unto God;" and he did so. And, finally, when he took up his journey

with his family for Egypt, he stopped (Gen. xlv. 1) at Beersheba, that long-established place of worship, and "offered sacrifices unto the God of his father." Now, what is all this but stated places for stated as well as occasional and special seasons of public worship? Suppose a company of Christians, wandering, like the patriarchs and their tribes, from place to place. Wherever they stop for any length of time, and they are at liberty to do it, they build a church, and call upon the name of the Lord. Now, admit it to be a part of their religion to keep a Sabbath, and these churches are not only just what you would expect to find, but they are all so many proofs of the actual existence and observance of that Sabbath. For what can their design be, except to accommodate the public, social, and stated, as well as occasional worship of the whole company or tribe? And what less than this could have been the design of the patriarchal altars? What less can they argue than social, public worship, at stated times?

(2.) On the supposition of a Sabbath, as there is nothing in the nature of time itself to give one portion a preference over another, and the appointment of one period rather than another must be in this sense arbitrary, we should expect that, in deciding upon it, God would first select so *large a portion* as would best subserve the design of its consecration as a Sabbath; second, seize upon some fitting and ever-memorable *occasion* for the designation of the particular time; and, third, shape their *religious arrangements and observances* so as to make them, as far as possible, so many mementos of it. And this is just what God, on the supposition in question, has done. A seventh

is such a portion of time. The close of creation was such an occasion. During the period in question, as well as subsequently, their religious arrangements and observances bore every where the impress of *sevens*, and were thus only so many mementos of a Sabbath, returning regularly on every *seventh* day. Thus, when Noah was about to go into the ark, the direction (Gen. vii. 2) was, "Of every clean beast," which were the beasts for sacrifice, "thou shalt take to thee by sevens." The mourning for Jacob was a mourning of seven days. That of Job's friends with him was seven days. The token or seal of Abraham's covenant with Abimelech was (Gen. xxi. 30) "seven ewe lambs." The sacrifice that Job offered for his friends when the days of his trial were ended, (Job xlii. 8,) was "seven bullocks and seven rams." And in later periods especially, almost every thing had the impress of sevens upon it. But,

(3.) On the supposition of a Sabbath existing and observed during the patriarchal period, we should expect to find a *division of time into weeks*. Was there such a division? Nothing can be plainer. It stands out boldly on the face of the entire record. When God threatened the flood, (Gen. vii. 4,) the language is, "For yet *seven days*, and I will cause it to rain." When Noah had entered the ark, and all was ready, (v. 10,) "it came to pass, after *seven days*, that the waters," &c. When the flood had abated, and Noah had sent out the dove, and she returned, (viii. 10,) "he staid yet *other seven days*," and sent her out again. And when she returned, (v. 12,) "he staid yet *other seven days*," and sent her out again. When Jacob negotiated for his wife, the stipulation of Laban



(Gen. xxix. 27) was, "Fulfil her *week*" of years; and (v. 28) "Jacob did so, and fulfilled her *week*." When Jacob died, and Joseph, with his brethren, went up to the burial, (Gen. l. 10,) "he made a mourning for his father *seven days*." When Job's friends came to sympathize with him in his affliction, (Job ii. 13,) "they sat down with him upon the ground *seven days and seven nights*." When God sent the plague of blood on Egypt, (Ex. vii. 25,) "*seven days* were fulfilled," and then it was removed. Can it be doubted, then, that during the period in question, there was the division of time into weeks, or periods of seven days? But how came that division? It was not a *natural* one, like that of months or years, but purely an *artificial* or *conventional* one. How came it then? What gave it being? What kept it in existence? How can you explain it, except on the theory of an existing and regularly-returning Sabbath? Is not this, then, the true theory?

Since writing the above, Professor Stuart has politely furnished me with the following, as the correct and literal translation of the passages above:—

Gen. vii. 4, "For after days yet seven," etc.

Gen. vii. 10, "And it came to pass after a *heptade* (seventh) of days."

Gen. viii. 10, "And he waited yet a *heptade* of days," etc.

Gen. viii. 12, "And he waited yet a *heptade* of days," etc. *Remark.*—How came this *heptade* of days to be thus distinguished? From what else could it spring, but from the original institution of the Sabbath?

Thus far the professor. The correctness of his view, as well as of that already taken, is rendered in-



disputable by the following considerations : — In Gen. xxix. 14, we are informed that Jacob abode with Laban “the space of a month.” The original is חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים (*hodesh yamim*;) and means, literally, “a new moon of days.” The verse, literally translated, would be, “He abode with him a new moon of days.” In Numbers xi. 20, 21, the form of expression in the original is the same. The Israelites were to eat flesh “a whole month;” i. e. “a new moon of days.” Here, then, we have this fact, that the new moon was to the Hebrew a measure and designation of time, so that when he wished to designate a month, his form of expression was, “a new moon of days.” In the very terms, then, by which the Hebrew was wont to designate the month, we have the proof, (1.) of the existence, and, (2.) of the regular return, of the new moon at such intervals of time as made it the *natural*, and, therefore, the appropriate measure and designation of the period in question. But the Hebrew had another form of expression for another period of time. When he wished to describe the period which we call a week, he said (Gen. vii. 10; viii. 10, 12) שִׁבְעַת יָמִים (*shibath yamim*;) literally, a “heptade,” or “seventh of days.” What, now, is the fair and necessary inference? Why, that, as the new moon, by its existence and regular return, came to be the *natural* measure and designation of its period of time, so the Sabbath, by its existence and regular return, came to be the *artificial* or *conventional* measure and designation of its period. Did the Hebrew, when he said “a new moon of days,” mean a month? Equally clear is it, that when he said “a heptade,” or “seventh

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of days," he meant a week. Did the Hebrew, when he so described the month, give proof, in the very form of his expression, of the existence and regular return of the new moon? So, when he described the week as "a seventh of days," he gave equal proof of the existence and regular return of the Sabbath.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE SABBATH IN EGYPT.

IF the Sabbath had an existence, and its observance were so important, why, it is asked, do we hear no mention of it during the four hundred and thirty years' bondage in Egypt? It must have been encroached upon by the severity of that bondage; why, then, have we no complaint of such encroachment, nor, indeed, any intimation whatever of a Sabbath during all that period?

This is the same objection as before, only that its form is changed, and its application is limited to a portion, instead of extending to the whole of the two thousand five hundred years. It is made up, as before, of a fact asserted and an inference from it. The fact is, that there was no such complaint or intimation; the inference is, therefore there was then no Sabbath.

1. Admit the fact, the inference does not follow. The whole history of that bondage, and of the deliverance from it, is given in twelve short chapters. Of these, eight are occupied with the description of the plagues, and the various measures taken to effect the deliverance, and three with what passed between God and Aaron and Moses, preparatory to their un-

dertaking the work, leaving but *one*, or *less than one*, for the entire history of the four hundred and thirty years' bondage. And is it wonderful, that in so brief a history of so long a period, there should be no complaint of the violation, and no intimation of the observance, of an existing Sabbath? By no means. Were the record as silent as alleged, it would prove nothing. But,

2. It is not true that the record is silent. So far from it, brief as it is, it is manifest, on the whole face of it, that the encroachments of Egyptian bondage on the religious opportunities, privileges, and rights of the Israelites, and so upon their religion, were the head and front of its offending; and that the great object of God in effecting their deliverance, was their restoration to and confirmation in the worship and service of himself as the true God, in opposition to the idol gods of the Egyptians. This was the great end. As a necessary means to this, the great object was the restoration to the Hebrews of their religious and consequent civil liberty. They could not serve God without the liberty to do it. This, they had not in Egypt. And as the question of American freedom was once wrapped up in the simple question of a threepenny tax on tea, so the question of Hebrew freedom was in this case wrapped up in the question whether they should have their Sabbath, with its opportunities of sacrifice and worship, and its connected religious privileges and rights. Practically, then, as a *means* to its appropriate *end*, the great question at issue between God and Pharaoh, in respect to the deliverance of the Israelites, was **THAT OF THE SABBATH**,

## WITH ITS CONNECTED PRIVILEGES AND RIGHTS.

No intelligent and careful reader of the Bible can fail to see, on a moment's reflection, that this is a true statement of the real questions at issue in that marvellous interposition of Divine Providence. But when the mandate of Jehovah first came to Pharaoh, (Ex. v. 1,) "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness," the prompt and contemptuous reply (v. 2) was, "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, nor will I let Israel go." Jehovah's claims, as Deity, were proudly questioned, and his authority contemned. This raised a *previous question*, viz. *Who is the true God — the gods of Egypt, or the God of Israel?* This, of course, must be settled before it could be settled whether Israel should be allowed to serve him. To settle this, there must be a trial of strength. That trial must be of such a nature as to show that the false gods were perfectly in the power, and subject to the control, of the true one. Such was the trial. Each and all of the divine judgments in the case were not only designed, but in their nature fitted, to confound the gods of Egypt, and establish the claims of Israel's God. The aptness and the force of the demonstration, in its various steps, were truly wonderful. Nothing could exceed the clearness and the impressiveness with which each successive judgment made it manifest, that, in the hands of Israel's God, the gods of Egypt were weak and powerless, and, so far from affording protection to their deluded followers, could themselves be turned, by him, at any moment, and to any extent, into a torment and a curse. Introductory

to the plagues, (Ex. vii. 10—12,) Aaron's rod became a serpent; and, when the magicians cast down their rods that they might become so, so far from doing it, Aaron's swallowed them — thereby showing the superiority of his God to theirs.\* Then came the plagues.

\* The following view of the magicians' miracles is from Professor Bush's Notes on Exodus. The Hebrew will bear the translation which he gives it, and the nature of the case certainly demands it.

"Instead of reciting the various opinions of commentators upon this subject, on which volumes have been written, we shall briefly propound the interpretation which, of all others, strikes us as the most probable. And we regret that, from its depending so entirely upon the idiomatic structure of the Hebrew, the mere English reader will not perhaps be able fully to appreciate its force. We will endeavor to make it, however, if not demonstrable, at least intelligible. It is a canon of interpretation of frequent use in the exposition of the sacred writings, that verbs of action sometimes signify merely the *will* and *endeavor* to do the action in question. Thus, Ezek. xxiv. 13, 'I have purified thee, and thou wast not purged;' i. e. I have endeavored, used means, been at pains, to purify thee. John v. 44, 'How can ye believe which receive honor one of another?' i. e. endeavor to receive. Rom. ii. 4, 'The goodness of God *leadeth* thee to repentance;' i. e. endeavors or tends to lead thee. Amos ix. 3, 'Though they be *hid* from my sight in the bottom of the sea;' i. e. though they aim to be hid. 1 Cor. x. 33, 'I *please* all men;' i. e. endeavor to please. Gal. v. 4, 'Whosoever of you are *justified* by the law;' i. e. seek and endeavor to be justified. Ps. lxi. 4, 'They that *destroy* me are mighty;' i. e. that endeavor to destroy me; Eng. 'that *would* destroy me.' Acts vii. 26, 'And *set them at one* again;' i. e. wished and endeavored; Eng. '*would* have set them.' The passage before us we consider as exhibiting a usage entirely analogous. 'They also did in like manner with their enchantments;' i. e. they endeavored to do in like manner; just as in ch. viii. 18, it is said, 'And the magicians did so with their enchantments, to bring forth lice, *but*



The Nile, with its imaginary river-gods, was an object of peculiar sacredness and reverence to the Egyptians. Blood was an object of equal abhorrence. The first plague turned the holy river into blood — thus pouring contempt on it and its gods. The frog

*they could not;*’ the words being precisely the same in both instances. Adopting this construction, we suppose that the former clause of verse 12 should be rendered, ‘For they cast down every man his rod, *that* they might become serpents;’ which the Hebrew reader will perceive to be a rendering precisely parallel to that which occurs ch. vi. 11, ‘Speak unto Pharaoh *that* he let the children of Israel go;’ Heb. ‘*and* he shall let go.’ So, also, ch. vii. 2, ‘Shall speak unto Pharaoh, *that* he send;’ Heb. ‘*and* he shall send.’ The magicians cast down their rods that they might undergo a similar transmutation with that of Moses, but it is not expressly said that they *were* so changed, and we therefore incline to place their discomfiture in the loss of their rods, those instruments with which they had vainly hoped to compete with Moses. If it be contended that there was some kind of change produced on the magicians’ rods, but that it was effected by feats of juggling, or legerdemain, and amounted in fact merely to an optical illusion, it may be asked whether it is probable that they were prepared with all the necessary apparatus to perform their prodigy at one and the same interview with that here mentioned. Moreover, if they had practised a deception by imposing upon the senses of the company, would not Moses have triumphantly detected and exposed it? We doubt, therefore, whether there were any change at all produced upon the rods of the magicians. Should it be said that precisely the same expression is made use of in respect to Aaron’s rod, and that we have as good evidence of the *transformation* of their rods as of his, we answer, that it is expressly asserted (v. 10) of Aaron’s rod, that it became a serpent, while of the others this is not asserted, at least as we interpret the language.”

The same principles of interpretation apply to what is said of the other plagues. Ex. vii. 22 says, in reference to the plague of blood, “And the magicians did so with their enchantments;” i. e.

was held sacred by them, as an emblem of preservation in floods and inundations. The second plague filled the waters and the land of Egypt with them to such an extent, that when it ceased, so far from ministering preservation, the Egyptians (Ex. viii. 14) "gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank" with their rotting and polluted carcasses. To enter the temple of any of their deities with lice, or any vermin of the kind, upon their garments, was to the Egyptians one of the greatest of profanations; so much so, that to prevent it, they generally wore two linen garments, one over the other, and laid aside the outer whenever they approached their gods. By the third plague, (Ex. viii. 17,) "all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt," covering man and beast, so that not one of them could go into the presence of his idol god without offering insult to him. Among the living objects of their worship, the bull, the heifer, the ram, the he-goat, were most sacred. The fifth plague laid these dead at the feet

attempted to do so. It is not said that they succeeded. So, Ex. viii. 7 should read, "And the magicians did so, (*attempted to do so,*) *that* they might bring up frogs." And (Ex. viii. 18) we have it in terms, that "the magicians did so with their enchantments, to bring forth lice, but they could not." On this interpretation the magicians made four attempts in behalf of Egypt's gods to cope with Israel's God, and failed in all. As was natural, they then acknowledged, "This is the finger of God." Had they, however, succeeded in the other cases, so far from acknowledging the finger of God in consequence of their failure in the one last case, they would but have attributed it to some other cause, and gone on still testing the strength of Egypt's gods with the God of Israel. Success in three cases, and failure in one, surely would not have wrung out the condemnation of themselves and their gods in the unwelcome acknowledgment that Israel's was the true God.

of their worshippers. Of inanimate things, the heavenly host — the sun, moon, and stars — were favorite objects of adoration. The ninth plague put out their light over all the Egyptians, and showed that neither sun, nor moon, nor stars, could prevent the supernatural darkness of the superior power of Israel's God. So it was with all the plagues. They were not, nor were they designed to be, marvellous exhibitions merely of divine power, made only for effect, and irrespective of the great question at issue, but made with special reference to that question. Each was not only an exhibition of such power, but, in its nature and design, a test of strength between Israel's God and the gods of Egypt. "Yea, (Ex. xii. 12,) against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; *I am the Lord,*" was the purpose and the plan of that whole interposition. By such a judgment it was that the great question, "*Who is the true God?*" was settled, and the claim of Israel's God, "*I*" (not the gods of Egypt) "*am the Lord,*" fully established. This done, the Hebrews were won back to the God of their fathers; the question of their deliverance was settled; and the way was opened for the restoration to them *of their religious and consequent civil liberty*; i. e. of those religious opportunities, privileges, and rights, of which their bondage had deprived them, and which, *as a means to an end*, involved the question of their liberty, and were essential to their continued fidelity to their great Deliverer; and, as such, were in fact the question at issue between him and Pharaoh. The *previous* question was, *Who is the true God?* That settled, the *main* question was, *Shall Israel be allowed to serve him?* i. e. *Shall Israel have their religious, and,*

so far, their civil freedom? To *test* this, the *practical* question was, Shall Israel have their Sabbath, with its opportunities of worship and sacrifice, and its connected privileges and rights? It was, throughout, a grand controversy between God and Pharaoh for the religious freedom of his people, as that freedom was involved in, and made to turn upon, their liberty to observe the Sabbath, with its connected opportunities of sacrifice and worship. That it was so is manifest,

(1.) From the fact, that the one, uniform, and great demand of Moses and Aaron, in the name of God, and on behalf of the people, was, that they might go where they could serve God, by holding a *religious festival* to him—a plain declaration, that where they were, they had neither the time nor the liberty to do it, but that their privileges and rights in these respects were taken away. In their first interview with Pharaoh, (Ex. v. 1, 3,) the demand, in its original and official form, was, “Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a *feast* (religious festival) unto me in the wilderness.”—“Let us go, we pray thee, three days’ journey into the desert, and *sacrifice* unto the Lord our God.” And subsequently (compare Ex. vii. 16; viii. 1, 20, 25, 27, 28; ix. 1, 13; x. 3, 8, 9, 24, 25, 26; xii. 31, 32) the one unceasing demand was, “Let my people go, that they may serve me.”—“With our flocks and our herds will we go; for we must hold a *feast* (religious festival) unto the Lord.”—“Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt-offerings, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God.” But why go out of Egypt for this, except on the ground that they could not do it in Egypt?

(2.) The same is manifest from Pharaoh's proposition for a compromise. When visited with the plague of flies, (Ex. viii. 25,) he "called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God *in the land.*" And this he proffered as a substitute for going into the wilderness to sacrifice. But how could it be a substitute, except on the ground that they had not been allowed to sacrifice "in the land" before?

(3.) Moses' answer confirms the fact, and lets us into the reason of it. "It is not meet," said he, (Ex. viii. 26, 27,) "so to do; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God: lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us?" \* This is as if he had said, "We cannot do so; for if we do we must sacrifice the bullock, the ram, &c., — the very deities of the Egyptians, — to our God. Our favorite sacrifices will be their favorite gods. What is worship to us will be sacrilege to them. And will they look quietly on, and see us, their slaves, offer their favorite national gods in sacrifice to our God? It cannot be. All Egypt will be in arms at such an outrage. 'We will therefore go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to the Lord our God.'" Such was the reply. Can it be doubted that previous to this, the Israelites had neither the times, nor the privileges, nor the rights, of such worship, "in the land"?

(4.) As a general thing, the Israelites, while in Egypt, had fallen in with the idolatry of their op-

\* The Chaldee version has it, "For the beasts which the Egyptians worship, shall we offer in sacrifice; lo, shall we offer for sacrifice the beasts which the Egyptians worship?"



pressors — thereby showing that they had lost their disposition, as well as their opportunities and rights, to worship Jehovah. This fact is plainly asserted in the inspired record. When Joshua had fairly planted them in the promised land, in his exhortation to them just before his death, he said, (Jos. xxiv. 14,) "Put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, even in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord." In Ezekiel, also, (xx. 6—8,) God says, that when he brought them out of Egypt, he said to them, "Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me; they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt." Indeed, it is only on the supposition that, as a general thing, idolatry had been the *habit* of Israel, as well as Egypt, that you can explain the readiness with which they fell away to the worship of the molten calf at Sinai. After witnessing such marvellous displays of divine power, such convincing evidences of the superiority of Jehovah to the gods of Egypt, how could any, but a people *habituated* to worship those gods, and, from the force of that very habit, still half in doubt whether they were not the true ones, within three short months, actually deny their great Deliverer, and bow down in senseless homage to one of the idol gods of their oppressors? On any other supposition, the scene at Sinai were little less than a miracle.

But whence came it, that idolatry was the *habit* of the Hebrews while in Egypt? Not from the force



of example merely; for the Hebrew, being a herdsman, was such "an abomination to the Egyptians," (Gen. xlv. 34,) that (Gen. xliii. 32) "the Egyptian might not eat bread with the Hebrews." This fact, especially when accompanied with a grinding oppression, would beget a similar prejudice in the Hebrew in return, and so destroy the force of example, in leading him off to the worship of his oppressor's gods. Causes more powerful than example, then, and better adapted to the end, must have existed, and conspired to work out such a result. As they could not worship their God without offering insult and committing sacrilege to the gods of Egypt, suppose them stripped, by the strong arm of oppression, of all their religious opportunities, privileges, and rights, and, in all public, social worship, compelled to worship Egypt's gods or none; in such a state of things you have causes adequate to the result. With no Sabbath, with its stated opportunities for public and social religious instruction and worship; with no occasional opportunities of the kind; and with no privileges and rights peculiar to the worship of their God, — and this continued from generation to generation through a period of two hundred years or more, — no wonder that they forsook, if they did not forget, the God of their fathers, and fell in with the idolatry of their oppressors. On this supposition, their idolatry is explained. On no other can it be.

(5.) That this is the true solution, is further manifest from the manner in which Pharaoh first received the command to let the people go. The first part of that mandate (Ex. v. 1—8) was, "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Let my people go." To this Pharaoh

replied, "Who is Jehovah, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" The second part of the mandate was, "that they may hold a feast (a festival of sacrifice and worship) to me in the wilderness." To this he answered, "Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? Behold, the people are many, yet ye make them" (all) "*rest* from their burdens!"—literally, (*hishbattem*,) "ye cause them to sabbatize, or keep Sabbath from their burdens!"—Strange infatuation, that you should expect me to allow this! Indeed, worshippers as they generally are of Egypt's gods, what real care have they for the God of which you speak, or the season of religious rest and sacrifice for which you clamor? Nay, nay, it is a mere pretence—a cover to their indolence. "They be idle"—"They be idle; therefore they cry, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God." Such was plainly the drift and meaning of the reply. And being so, what is it but a clear intimation, that the demand of Moses and Aaron was a demand for the restoration of the Sabbath, with its connected opportunities and privileges of religious instruction, sacrifice, and worship?

Moreover, (6.) the term "feast" in the demand is indicative of as much as this. That the Sabbath was called a "feast" is proved by Lev. xxiii. 2, 3, where it is named as one of "the feasts of the Lord." That *the* feast which Moses demanded was *some* religious festival, or season for sacrifice and worship, is proved by the terms of the demand as quoted above, p. 48. That it was *that* festival or season, which was afterwards the distinguishing badge of the people as the worshippers of Jehovah, and which was most

sacredly and scrupulously observed by them, is certainly most probable. That festival, or season, was the Sabbath. After their departure from Egypt, the first "feast," or season of worship, of which we have any account, was that of the Sabbath. In the subsequent enumeration of "the feasts of the Lord," (Lev. xxiii.) the Sabbath is named first — "These are my feasts. Six days shall work be done; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest," &c. Then the several yearly feasts are named. And finally, the Sabbath, above all, was made their distinguishing "sign," or badge, as the worshippers of Jehovah, and not of idols. Can it be doubted, then, that this was the feast so sternly demanded by Moses, and so resolutely refused by Pharaoh? and, therefore, that the grand object of God's interposition in the case, was, to restore the Sabbath to his people, and with that their religious freedom? and this done to leave them no excuse for not serving him with fidelity?

Indeed, (7.) all this is distinctly declared by Moses in the subsequent history. In Deut. v. 12—15, we find the following:—

"Keep the Sabbath-day to sanctify it, as Jehovah thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of Jehovah thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy man-servant and thy maid-servant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that Jehovah thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand and by a stretched-

out arm: therefore Jehovah thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day."

What is the true import of this passage? It occurs in the midst of a recapitulation of the ten commandments. It contains, first, an injunction to keep the Sabbath; then a declaration that the seventh day of the week is the day for keeping it; then an injunction to the Hebrew to abstain from all ordinary labor on that day, and to let his children, and *servants*, and beasts, do the same; then the reason of this provision for the servants — "*that they may rest as well as thou;*" and then a reference to his bondage in Egypt, and deliverance from it. *Why this reference?* Not, surely, to give the reason for the original institution of the Sabbath; for that is given (Ex. xx. 11) thus — "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; *wherefore*" (*because he did this*, not because he brought the Hebrews out of Egypt) "the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day,\* and hallowed it." To make the passage before us give another and a different reason, is to involve the Bible in contradiction. The obvious design of the reference, then, was to give force to the reason of the provision for the servants. How it would give force to that reason, may be seen in the following paraphrase:—

"Keep the Sabbath, &c., and let your servants keep it, that they may rest as well as thou; and, that

\* The Septuagint, and several other versions, have this:—"The Lord blessed the *seventh* day," &c. This is plainly the true reading; for it agrees with the facts in the case, and also with the original record in Gen. ii. 3.

thou mayest let them rest as well as thou, remember that thou wast a servant once in the land of Egypt, where thou wouldst have been glad of such a day of rest, but couldst not have it ; and remember, also, that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, &c., *because that* \* the Lord thy God had commanded thee to keep the Sabbath, and thou couldst not do it there." This view is demanded by the context, and makes the reference to the bondage in Egypt apt and forcible. Well might the Hebrew let his servants rest on the Sabbath, when he remembered how he was deprived of it in Egypt, and what God had wrought to give it back to him, and with it all his religious privileges and rights. Can it be doubted, then, that this is the true import and design of the reference? And being so, what is the whole passage but a distinct declaration, that, as involving the question of their religious freedom, the Sabbath, with its opportunities of worship and its connected religious privileges and rights, was the great question at issue between God and Pharaoh in the deliverance of the

\* The term *al-ken*, rendered here "therefore," is often used in the Bible in the sense of "because that," or "on account of," as may be seen by consulting any Hebrew Lexicon: Or, without any change in the translation, the paraphrase may run thus:—"Remember that thou wast a servant once in the land of Egypt, where thou wouldst have been glad of such a day of rest, but couldst not have it ; and that then the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, that thou mightest have it. Therefore, because he has done all this to give it back to you, he has commanded you anew to keep it." In either view, the passage teaches that the Sabbath, as a preëxisting institution, was the reason for the deliverance, and not that the deliverance was a reason for the institution of the Sabbath.



Hebrews from their house of bondage? Put, then, these items together — the demand to go out where they could keep a festival of sacrifice and worship to the Lord; the permission, as a compromise, to sacrifice in the land; the fact that they could not do this without committing, as the Egyptians would regard it, sacrilege; that, as a general thing, the Hebrews had fallen in with the idolatry of their oppressors, — which, considering their strong mutual repellances, could not have been, had they not been deprived, by the strong arm of power, of their religious opportunities and rights; that the Sabbath was preëminently the “feast” of the Jews; that Pharaoh actually complains that Moses and Aaron cause the people to keep Sabbath from their burdens; and, finally, that Moses informs us in terms that God brought them up out of Egypt, because he had commanded them to keep Sabbath, implying, beyond question, that they could not keep it there; — put all these items together, and then add the fact that the first religious observance, of which we have any account after their deliverance, is that of the Sabbath, and can it be believed that we have no mention of a Sabbath, and no complaint of encroachments upon it, during the period of Egyptian bondage? What, indeed, in the light of these facts, is that whole history but one unbroken complaint? And what was the “feast,” or season of sacrifice and worship, so loudly demanded, but that very season whose religious observance is so early mentioned in the subsequent history? And that season was the Sabbath. The evidence on this point will accumulate as we proceed.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE SABBATH IN THE WILDERNESS.

THE Sabbath, it is said, was originally given in the second month after the deliverance from Egypt, in the wilderness of Sin, and as a memorial of that deliverance.

1. The only proof attempted of its being such a memorial, is drawn from the passage (Deut. v. 15) we have just examined. The form of phraseology, "*Therefore* the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day," it is said, proves that it was instituted, and was to be kept, as a memorial of the deliverance referred to. But, as we have seen, the Hebrew admits of, and the connection of the passage requires, the rendering, "*because that* the Lord thy God had commanded thee to keep the Sabbath-day." This rendering makes the Sabbath, as previously existing, a reason for the deliverance, and not the deliverance a reason for its institution. That this is the true sense of the passage, and that the Sabbath was not instituted as a memorial of the event in question, is further manifest,

(1.) From the fact, that, as such a memorial, it has *no significancy*. Nothing is more obvious than that in all the memorials, symbols, types, &c., of the old economy, care was taken to have the sign a fit em-

blem of the thing signified. There was always a fitness in the nature of the one to that of the other. Thus, in the Sabbath as a memorial of creation, there is a fitness in the memorial to the thing memorialized. But as a memorial of deliverance from Egypt, what is there in the sign to represent the thing signified? They were not delivered on the seventh day of the week; at least there is no evidence of it. Nor were they brought out by virtue of seven plagues; for there were ten of them. Nor was there any thing in the event itself to make the religious observance of each seventh day an appropriate and fit memorial of it. As such memorial, why, then, should it recur every seventh day? Why not have it every tenth, according to the number of plagues? Or every seventieth? Or every month? Or, as it was the day of their national freedom, why not have it, like our own anniversary of American independence, once a year, and on the day and month of their deliverance? That would have made it as a memorial, significant of the event. But as it is, it has no significancy of it whatever.

(2.) To suppose it such a memorial involves the Bible in *irreconcilable contradiction*. The reason given for its institution, in Ex. xx. 11, is, "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, &c., and rested the seventh day." That given in Ex. xxxi. 17, is the same. And both are the same with that given in the first mention of it, in Gen. ii. 3. Every where the reason is the same. It is only in the passage under consideration, that a different reason even *seems* to be given. What, then, is the inference? That the Bible contradicts itself—assigning two different reasons for

the same thing, the one utterly unlike, and twenty-five hundred years apart from, the other? Or, that the passage in question is to be understood in some other sense; and in that especially, which, while it makes the Bible consistent, is allowed by the original, and adds force and beauty to the connection? But,

(3.) The *passover*, and the *sanctification*, or *setting apart of the first-born* of man and beast to the service of the altar and the temple, were specially instituted as memorials of the deliverance in question. While yet in Egypt, (Ex. xii. 1—27,) God, by Moses and Aaron, gave to the Israelites specific direction in regard to the intent of the passover, the manner of keeping it, and its perpetual observance in the land to which he was about to bring them. Of its observance there he says, (v. 14,) “This day shall be unto you for a *memorial*; and ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever. And (vs. 26, 27) when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.” After their departure, the command was, (Ex. xiii. 3, 8—10,) “Remember this day in which ye came out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. And (after repeating the directions about keeping it) thou shalt show thy son in that day, saying, This is done *because* of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a *sign* unto thee upon thine hand, and for a *memorial* between thine eyes; that the Lord’s law may be in thy mouth; for with a

strong hand hath the Lord brought thee out of Egypt. Thou shalt *therefore* keep this ordinance in his season *from year to year.*" This was their national anniversary, commemorative, like the anniversary of American independence, of their national deliverance.

In the same connection, also, God said, (Ex. xiii. 2, 12,) "Sanctify unto me all the first-born, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast; it is mine;" or, (v. 12,) "Set them apart to the Lord, &c.; the males shall be the Lord's" — the beasts (v. 13) to be offered in sacrifice, and the men to be redeemed. "And (vs. 14—16) it shall be, when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What is this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the Lord brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage; for it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the Lord slew all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both the first-born of man, and the first-born of beast: *therefore* I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males, (of beasts;) but all the first-born of my children I redeem. And *it* shall be for a *token* upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes, that by strength of hand the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt."

Here, then, we have two distinct and appropriate institutions — the one to be observed from year to year as a great national religious anniversary, the other entering as a permanent organic arrangement into their religious and civil polity, and both standing memorials of their deliverance from Egypt. In these memorials, moreover, there was a fitness in the sign to the thing signified. Why, then, have a third memorial

of the same event, and especially one destitute of all fitness as a representative of the thing memorialized? Or, if a third were to be had, why not institute it like the others, at the time? Why wait for a two months' journey into the wilderness? Manifestly, the Sabbath was not instituted as a memorial of deliverance from Egypt.

2. Nor was the Sabbath originally instituted in the second month after the deliverance, and while the Hebrews were in the wilderness of Sin. That it was, is argued from the general tenor of the mention made of it (Ex. xvi. 23—30) at the giving of manna; and especially from the fact, that it is said to have been "given," or "*made known*," then. "See, (Ex. xvi. 29,) for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath;" and, (Ezek. xx. 11, 12,) "I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments. Moreover, also, I gave them my Sabbaths;" and, (Neh. ix. 13, 14,) "Thou gavest them commandments, and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath." And how, it is asked, could the Sabbath have existed before, if it were "*given*," or "*made known*," then?

(1.) This argument assumes that laws and institutions are never said to be "given," or "*made known*," when they are renewed, but only when they are first promulgated or established. But this is not true. For, among the statutes, &c., which God, in Ezekiel, says he gave in the wilderness, circumcision was obviously one. Yet that existed and was observed before. Indeed, Christ (John vii. 22) says in terms that it was given then, and yet did exist before — "Moses *gave* unto you circumcision, not that it is of Moses, (originally,) but of the fathers." This settles the point,



that laws and institutions are sometimes said to be given, when they are merely reëstablished, or incorporated into some new economy. The same is true of the phrase "made known," in Nehemiah. The term in the original is the same with that translated "showed" in Ezekiel. But as we have just seen, circumcision was one of the things "showed," or "made known," by Moses at that time. Yet the law of circumcision was not then first promulgated. So with the law of murder. That was as old as the flood. "Whoso (Gen. ix. 6) sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." And the institution of marriage, too, was as old as creation. Yet both these were among the statutes and the judgments of the Mosaic economy. This is conclusive, that laws and institutions are said to be "given," or "made known," when they are only reëstablished, or incorporated into some new economy, as well as when originally promulgated. And this, even if we could not explain the reason or propriety of the usage, shows conclusively that the argument from it is without the least force. But we can explain it. Nothing is easier or more obvious. There are two explanations, either of which is satisfactory. The Mosaic economy was made up of two kinds of institutions and laws. The one were those which had existed before; the other, those which were given by Moses for the first time. Yet, taken together as a whole, they made a code, or an economy, which, as a whole, was new. It was a new code—it was a new economy, although made up in part of elements that had existed before. Speaking of them, then, as a whole, or as a part even of this whole, it was per-



fectly proper and natural to speak of them as "*given*," or "*made known*," at the time when the new code or economy, as such, was promulgated or established.

But we have a better solution. The Sabbath, with its connected observances, was subsequently, we find, the distinguishing badge, or "sign," by which the worshippers of Jehovah were to be known from the worshippers of idols. If it existed before the bondage in Egypt, it must have been an equally distinctive badge; and therefore the institution which pagan oppressors would be most likely to invade, or take from their vassals. Suppose, then, that the Hebrews were robbed of their Sabbath in Egypt, and with it of their other religious privileges and rights; that, as a result, they had generally fallen in with the current idolatry; that, by such degeneracy, continued through a period of one or two hundred years, they had forgotten and lost the regular day for the Sabbath, or, if not this, had forgotten the proper modes of sacrifice and worship upon it—and Moses (Ex. x. 26) says, "For we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come thither" (into the wilderness)—suppose all this; and now God, by the hand of Moses, brings them out, and, with such new institutions and laws as their circumstances demand, gives them back the old ones too, and makes known to them the things they had forgotten; and then how natural and impressive the language, "I gave them my Sabbaths"—"Thou gavest them commandments, and madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath"! Could any thing be more so? But,

(2.) If the Sabbath were originally given at the giving of manna, (Ex. xvi. 23—29,) how marvellous the

difference in the first account of its original institution and that of the passover and the sanctification of the first-born! In the first mention of the original institution of the two latter, (Ex. xii. 1—27, and xiii. 1—16,) we have a minute and specific detail of the time, occasion, and reason or design of their institution. We should expect a similar record of the original institution of the Sabbath. On the supposition of its institution at creation, we have such record in Gen. ii. 2, 3. On the supposition of its institution in the wilderness, we ought to have a similar record. But we have not. Though, on this supposition, instituted nearly at the same time, and for precisely the same reasons, with the passover and the sanctification of the first-born, the first record of it says not one word of the time, or the occasion, or the reasons of it, nor indeed of the proper modes of its observance. The record is full and minute, on these points, in regard to the other institutions. Why is it not equally so in reference to this? Nay, in reference to them, the entire structure of the language is that of appointment and command. It is throughout “thou shalt,” “ye shall,” “they shall,” do this or that, and it “shall be a memorial” of this or that. But there is not a word of this in the supposed first record (Ex. xvi. 23—29) of the Sabbath. The structure here is, “To-morrow is” — not *shall be* — “the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord.” Why the difference, except on the supposition, that the mention of the Sabbath in this case, so far from being that of its original institution, was a mere incidental mention of it, as of an institution already existing and observed, and now particularly spoken of in consequence of the manna’s not falling

upon that day, and as the reason of its not falling then?—as if the historian would say, (Ex. xvi. 26,) “On six days of the week the manna shall fall, and ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day of the week, which, as an existing and previous fact, is the Sabbath, there shall be none.” Such a view accounts for the difference in these records of the Sabbath, the passover, and the sanctification of the first-born. In the light of it, we can readily see why it is, that in the one case, there is great minuteness of specification and detail, and the language of appointment and command, while in the other there is nothing of the kind. The one is the record of the original establishment of new institutions; the other, an incidental mention of an old one.

(3.) The circumstances of the case, and the general connection and obvious import of the passage in question, are decisive of the correctness of this view. This will be obvious from a familiar paraphrase or running comment. The people (v. 2) murmur for bread. To supply them, God says, (v. 4,) “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day” of the week, the Sabbath excepted, “that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or no. For (v. 5) it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day” of the week “they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily,” or “on other days;” so that they shall have nothing to prevent their resting and worshipping me on the Sabbath, and I may thus be able to prove them, to see whether they will walk in my law or no. The manna fell, and the people gathered it as di-

rected. Some, in their anxiety for the future, kept some of it (v. 20) "until the" next "morning, and it bred worms and stank; and Moses was wroth" at their want of confidence in God. Nevertheless, the manna continued to fall, "and (v. 21) they gathered it every morning" of the week, "every man according to his eating; and when the sun waxed hot it melted," so that there was none to be gathered after that, until the next morning. "And (v. 22) it came to pass, that on the sixth day" of the week, as God had said, "they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and," as God, by Moses, had told them (v. 5) "to prepare" this, so that it would keep for the next day, "all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses," that he might tell them, and they the people, how to prepare it. And there was the more need of this, inasmuch as some had tried to keep it over to the next morning during the previous week, and, instead of keeping, it had only "bred worms and stank." And Moses (v. 23) "said unto them, This is what the Lord hath said," viz. that (v. 5) on the sixth day of the week they shall prepare what they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather on other days. "To-morrow," as you are aware, "is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." That you may be able to keep it, you may prepare your food by baking or seething, just as you choose. Prepared either way, it will keep. Therefore, "bake that which ye will bake, and seethe that ye will seethe," and eat what you wish of it to-day, "and that which remaineth over lay up for you, to be kept until the morning." And they did so, (v. 24,) "and it did not stink, neither was there

any worm therein," as there was before. "And," (v. 25,) when the Sabbath had come, "Moses said, Eat that to-day, for to-day is" — not shall be — "a Sabbath" or holy rest "unto the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days" of the week (v. 26) "ye shall gather it, but on the seventh day" of the week, "the Sabbath, in it," because it is the Sabbath, and that you may have nothing to hinder you from keeping it, "there shall be none. And," (v. 27,) yet after all this, "there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, but they found none. And the Lord" (v. 28) was grieved at their disobedience, and "said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?" Just think what I have done that you might have the Sabbath back again, and have nothing to prevent your keeping it. When you could not keep it in Egypt because of your oppressors, I brought you out thence; and now, that you may have nothing to prevent your keeping it here, I give you, on the sixth day of the week, the food of two days. "See, (v. 29,) for that the Lord hath given you" back "the Sabbath, therefore," because he has done it, and that you may keep it, "he giveth you on the sixth day" of the week "the bread of two days." Why, then, should ye not keep it? Why not spend it in the worship and service of the Lord your God? "Abide ye every man in his place: let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So (v. 30) the people rested on the seventh day." Can it be doubted that this is an incidental mention of an institution already existing, and not the record of its original establishment? Can it be doubted, either, that the restoration of this to an oppressed people,



with its accompanying privileges and rights, as an ancient institution of their ancient faith, was one grand object of their deliverance?

Finally, if the Sabbath were originally instituted in the wilderness, and as a memorial of deliverance from Egypt, why should it *be incorporated into the decalogue*, rather than the law of the passover, or that of the sanctification of the first-born? The decalogue, with the exception of the law of the Sabbath, is confessedly made up of those laws whose obligation is founded in the very nature of things, is unchanging and perpetual in its character, and common to man in every age and every nation. It is, in one word, *a summary of the COMMON LAW OF THE WORLD* — of that common law, which exists prior to, is independent of, and yet enters naturally and necessarily as FUNDAMENTAL LAW, into every well-ordered ecclesiastical and civil polity. This, confessedly, is true of the decalogue, with the single exception of the law of the Sabbath. Here, then, according to the supposition before us, are three institutions, established about the same time, commemorative of the same event, and equally limited in their existence, obligation, and design, to the Jewish economy. Why should the law of one of them go in as part and parcel of the common law of mankind, rather than that of either of the others? Or, if a selection must be made, why should it fall upon the Sabbath? The passover, as a sign or memorial, was most impressively significant of the thing signified. The Sabbath, as we have seen, has no such significance whatever. Why, then, should it take precedence of the passover? The sanctification of the first-born was also equally significant, and in addition to

this, entered, if not as fundamental, yet as permanent, *organic* law, into the entire Jewish polity. As such law it was to live as long as the polity itself. Why, then, should the Sabbath take precedence of it? There is but one answer. The Sabbath was not originally instituted in the wilderness, nor as a memorial of deliverance from Egypt, nor as limited to the Jewish economy. Like the marriage institution, it had its being at creation. It was made for man—the race. It grew naturally and necessarily out of his nature, necessities, and relations. It existed prior to and independent of the Jewish and every other individual and limited economy. As an *institution*, it began, like that of marriage, with the race; was made for the race, and was designed to live while the race should, and to go down through economy after economy, until the last economy should crumble to pieces, and time give place to eternity. Of course *the law of its observance*, “Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy,” was to it just what the law of the marriage institution, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” was to it. As the latter, whether written by the finger of God on tables of stone, or in the deep foundations of the nature, necessities, and relations of man, was a *part* of universal common law, and therefore included in God’s summary of that law, so it was with the former. That was as truly a part of the common law of the race as was the law of marriage, and, being so *in fact*, was of course incorporated *in form* into God’s summary of it. No other supposition can explain the precedence of the law of the Sabbath, in respect to its insertion in the decalogue, over that of the passover, or the sanctification of the first-born. The one was a part of

universal common law — going, therefore, as fundamental law, into all well-ordered economies. The others were but a part of the statute law of that particular economy. The one, therefore, because it *was* a part of it, went into God's summary of the common law of man. The others, because they were not a part of it, did not go into it. What other solution can be given of the fact in question? And this being given, how clear is it that the law of the Sabbath, like the laws of marriage, property, and life, is universally and perpetually binding!

*Objection.* But it is said, that "where Moses rehearses the commandments, (the fourth among the rest,) he says, (Deut. v. 3,) 'The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.'"<sup>\*</sup> And the inference is, that the Sabbath was not instituted at the creation, nor for all men, but in the wilderness, and for the Jew only, and of course is not obligatory on the Christian.

*Answer.* The covenant here spoken of included the whole decalogue. This is admitted. Whatever, then, the declaration, that it was not made with the fathers, proves in respect to one part of it, as, for instance, the law of the Sabbath, it equally proves in respect to every part. If it prove that the patriarchs had no Sabbath, and that the law of its observance was not binding on them, it proves equally that they had no God, and that the law of his worship was not binding; that they had no marriage institution, with its filial and conjugal relations, and that the laws of their observance, "Honor thy father and thy mother,"

<sup>\*</sup> Grew, on the Sabbath, p. 5.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery," were not binding; and so of the whole decalogue, the law of property, "Thou shalt not steal," and that of life, "Thou shalt not kill," not excepted. In the same manner, if the declaration in question prove that there is no Sabbath under the Christian dispensation, and that the law of its observance is not binding on those that live under it, with equal certainty does it prove that Christianity is a universal exemption from every obligation of the decalogue, and an entire extinction of every institution and every right guarded by it—the institution of marriage and the rights of conscience, property, and life, not excepted. And is it so? Were the patriarchs at liberty to worship God or not, to honor their parents or not, to commit adultery, lie, steal, and kill, or not, as they might choose, and with perfect impunity? And is this the glorious liberty wherewith Christ maketh free? No one pretends it.

But it is said, the institutions and rights guarded in the decalogue, with the laws of their observance, are, in their nature, of universal and unchanging obligation, and of course are binding on all men, in every age, and under every dispensation. Admit it; and how does it appear that the Sabbath, with the law of its observance, is not equally so? At all events, the declaration that "God made not this covenant with the fathers" does not prove it otherwise. It proves no more of the law of the Sabbath than of every other law in the decalogue. If, therefore, the law of the marriage institution, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," is, in its nature, of universal and unchanging obligation, equally so, for aught that *this passage* proves, is the law of the Sabbath. And the same is true of

every command of the decalogue. All are equally parts of the covenant in question. If all the others, then, be of universal and unchanging obligation, and, as such, binding on all men, in all ages, and under every dispensation, notwithstanding the fact that the covenant, of which they are a part, was not made with the fathers, why is not the law of the Sabbath equally so? Their association together in the same covenant surely argues them alike rather than unlike. At all events, if the one be purely Jewish, and the others not so, the proof lies elsewhere, not in this passage. *This* proves nothing either way; or, if any thing, it proves only that the law of the Sabbath, like every other commandment of the decalogue, is of universal and ceaseless obligation.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SABBATH A SIGN.

It is said, "God gave the Sabbath as a distinctive sign to the Israelites—a sign, that, for purposes of infinite wisdom, he had chosen them as a peculiar people, and separated them from the nations of the earth. How could the Sabbath have been such a distinctive sign, if it had been given to all nations?"\* The fact here asserted, and in the sense asserted, is supposed to be taught in Ex. xxxi. 13—17, and Ezek. xx. 12, 20.

Admitting, for the moment, the correctness of this interpretation, I ask,

1. *When* were the Israelites, as a nation, so chosen and separated? Not at the time of their deliverance from Egypt, obviously; nor at any subsequent period. They were delivered because they *were* God's chosen people already, not that they might afterwards become so. The truth is, they were originally chosen as God's peculiar people in the person of Abraham, their great progenitor. The Lord (Gen. xii. 1—3) said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house," (that was the commencement of the separation from the other nations,) "unto a land that I will show thee; and I will

\* Grew, on the Sabbath, p. 5.

make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great." And afterwards, when he entered more formally into special covenant with him, he said, (Gen. xv. 13—16,) "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years: and also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance." Nor were this selection and covenant ever lost sight of through the whole line of the patriarchs and their posterity, from Abraham to Moses. They were repeatedly renewed to Isaac and to Jacob, as the heads and representatives of their posterity. And Joseph, the last of the patriarchal line of whom we have any account previous to Moses, when he was about to die, said (Gen. l. 24) to his brethren, "I die; but God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." Accordingly when, after his death, (Ex. i. 8, 13, 14,) "there arose a new king in Egypt, which knew not Joseph," and "the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor, and made their lives bitter with hard bondage," so that (Ex. ii. 23,) "the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage," then, we are informed, (Ex. ii. 24, 25,) "God heard their groaning, and *God remembered his COVENANT with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.* And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them." And when he first summoned Moses to the work of their deliverance, (Ex. iii. 6, 10,) the language was, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: I have seen the

affliction of *my* people, and I am come down to deliver them. Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth *my* people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt." And when Moses first approached Pharaoh, (Ex. iv. 22, 23,) he was directed to say, "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is" (not is to be) "*my son, even MY FIRST-BORN*; and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me." They were therefore his people — his son, even his first-born, before their deliverance from Egypt. They had then, as truly as afterwards, their distinctive national existence, as his chosen people; and it was because they had, and because he remembered his covenant with them as such, that he came down to deliver. And that whole interposition in their behalf was, not their original selection as his peculiar people, but only their re-selection, accomplished by the fulfilment of covenant engagements growing out of their original selection more than six hundred years before. For hundreds of years, then, they had been God's chosen people. As such, they had had a distinctive tribal or national existence. And can it be, that during all this period they were without the great distinctive sign of that existence? If they had no Sabbath, and the Sabbath were that sign, as alleged, they were without it. So that, on this supposition, they had their distinctive existence as God's chosen people, but had no distinctive sign or badge of it until some centuries after that existence began! And can that be? By no means. Either they had the Sabbath before, or it was not a distinctive sign of their distinctive existence as God's chosen people. But it *was* such sign. They had the Sabbath, then, from the beginning. This conclusion is unavoidable.

To talk of a sign instituted five hundred years or more after the commencement of the thing signified, is absurd. Besides,

2. What were those "*purposes of infinite wisdom*," on account of which the selection and separation in question were made? The great purpose, as every one knows, — that which overshadowed and included every other, — was to preserve and perpetuate among men the knowledge and worship of Jehovah as the true God, in distinction from all idol gods; and thus to prepare the way for the coming and kingdom of Messiah. It was, that, amid the wide-spread and universal prevalence of idolatry among the nations, there might be one nation of worshippers of the true God, out of which, in the fulness of time, he should come, who was to ransom man, and be the Desire of all nations. If, then, the Sabbath were given to the Hebrews as a *distinctive sign* of their selection and separation by God from other nations, it could be such a sign, only, as it served to *mark* them as the believers in and worshippers of Jehovah as the true God, in distinction from the worshippers of idol gods. It must have been such a thing, in its origin, nature, or design, that the Hebrews, in observing it, would, by that act, profess themselves believers in and worshippers of him, as the only true God; so that its observance, in the very act of it, should be the great distinctive badge of their religious profession, and a constant and impressive memento that Jehovah, not any idol, was the God who sanctified or set them apart to his service. There must also have been something about it so unique in its character, and so unlike every other institution and ordinance, that its observance would say, Jehovah is

the only true God, and we believe in and worship him accordingly, more significantly and impressively than it could be said by the observance of any other. How else could it be the great distinctive sign of their great distinctive national peculiarity? How else become the distinctive badge of their distinctive religious profession as the worshippers of Jehovah?

Now, as a memorial of deliverance from Egypt, what was there in the Sabbath to make it, rather than any other ordinance or institution, such a distinguishing badge? The passover and the sanctification of the first-born were memorials of the same event, and, as signs, far more significant of the thing signified. To observe the Sabbath, then, as a memorial of *this* event, would not say, Jehovah is the only true God, and we believe in and serve him as such, any more significantly than to have observed either of these other institutions. Their observance would have been just as distinctive a badge of their belief in and worship of Jehovah, as the only true God, as was that of the Sabbath. Why, then, should the Sabbath have the precedence? On this supposition, it should not have. But change the supposition — admit that the Sabbath was instituted at creation as a standing memorial of the fact, that in six days Jehovah created the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh day, and then the regular observance of it by the Hebrews was a weekly *national testimony*, that the world was not made by the gods and according to the theories of paganism, but by Jehovah, and in six days, and that he, therefore, is the only living and true God. Such an institution, holding forth in its regular observance such a testimony, was, therefore, the institution best fitted, of all others,



to be the great distinctive sign or badge of their great distinctive peculiarity as the chosen people of God. Its observance, in this view of it, would most significantly mark them as the worshippers of Jehovah, and distinguish and keep them separate from the idolatrous nations around them, and thus be a sign forever of the covenant between them and their God. And,

3. This, indeed, is the true import of the passage (Ex. xxxi. 13—17) under consideration. The connection of the passage is this: God had given certain directions in regard to building the tabernacle. Then, lest they should encroach on the Sabbath in doing it, he adds, "Verily" (Hebrew, *Nevertheless*) "my Sabbaths shall ye keep;" and the reason assigned for it is, in the Hebrew, literally this: "For it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, for to make it known" (לִדְעֹתָ, *ladaat*), "that I, Jehovah, am he that sanctifies you." As a whole, then, the passage is as if God had said, "You are about to be employed in an important and sacred work, one requiring close attention and great despatch; nevertheless, be careful not to encroach on holy time. Let the business, urgent as it is, cease during the hallowed hours of the Sabbath; for the Sabbath is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, by the keeping of which it is to be known that I, Jehovah, am the God that sanctifies or sets you apart as mine." Such is the obvious and true import of the passage. And this import gives us the Sabbath as that sign, whose observance was to tell the world who and what their God was. Its observance was, therefore, the public profession of their religious faith — a public avowal that they were not idolaters, but the worshippers of Jehovah. Of

course, apostasy from the sign was, practically, and in effect, apostasy from the thing signified. It was practically a renunciation of their religious faith, and apostasy from their God. Of course, it was substantial idolatry, and, as such, a treasonable offence, punishable with death.

Moreover, on examining the passage further, we find, (v. 16,) that the children of Israel were "to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant," or standing ordinance ; that so observed, (v. 17,) it was a sign between Jehovah and them forever ; and finally, we learn what that was in the Sabbath, which made *it* such a sign, rather than any other ordinance. It was not, that God, without any fitness in the thing itself, had arbitrarily fixed it so ; nor that God had brought them out of Egypt. Not a word do we hear of any such reason. But "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." Why? What makes it so? "*For* in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." Here, then, we have it in distinct terms that it was *the connection of the Sabbath with the creation*, that made it, rather than the passover, or any other ordinance, the sign in question. What that connection was we have already seen. Jehovah made the world in six days, and rested on the seventh, and set apart the seventh to be observed as a perpetual memorial of what he had done. As such memorial, every individual who kept it, thereby declared his belief, that the world was not made by the gods, and according to the theories of paganism, but by Jehovah ; and that he, therefore, not they, was the real Creator, and of course the only living and true

God. A memorial, holding forth such a testimony in its observance, was, in its very nature, a distinctive sign or badge of the worshippers of Jehovah. They could not keep it without thereby marking themselves as worshippers of him, and not of idols. They could not neglect or refuse to keep it without losing their distinctive badge, and becoming so far identified with idolaters. It was preëminently the badge of their religious faith. To observe it, was to profess faith in Jehovah as the only true God. Not to observe it, was to say, Jehovah is *not* the *only* true God, and was tantamount to apostasy or idolatry; and as that government was a theocracy, such apostasy or idolatry was virtual high-treason. No wonder, then, that God selected this as the sign, rather than some other ordinance, and then placed such an estimate upon it, and dealt out such a penalty upon its violation. The Sabbath was fitted, in its nature, to be such a sign or badge. As such, the obligation to observe it was only another form of the obligation to have no other gods before Jehovah, and was therefore equally sacred, and its violation equally criminal.

In this view of the case, all is plain. Every thing is just what we should expect. *For* every thing there is a *reason*, good and sufficient; while, on the supposition that the Sabbath was originally given as a memorial of deliverance from Egypt, and yet selected as the sign in question, all is arbitrary, without reason, significancy, or aim. Moreover, in this view, too, we see at once why the Sabbath, with its connected privileges and rights, was to the idolatrous Egyptians the most obnoxious of all the Hebrew peculiarities, and therefore among the first of those peculiarities to be

taken away, and the last to be restored. It, with its privileges and rights, was their great distinctive badge as the worshippers of Jehovah. Its observance was therefore their weekly, national testimony against the gods of Egypt. No wonder their oppressors took it away. And when God came down to deliver, no wonder that, as a means to its end, or as involving the question of their religious and civil freedom, this became the great question at issue.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE ARGUMENT RECAPITULATED AND CLOSED.

SUPPOSE we now briefly review the ground over which we have passed. We have shown that in the first mention of the Sabbath, (Gen. ii. 2, 3,) there is every thing to prove that it was instituted at creation, the time specified, and was as truly one of the great permanent arrangements established for the race, as was the marriage institution, or any of the other arrangements then first brought into being. We have shown that the argument from geology is without force; that from Adam to Moses, there is every allusion to, and mention of, its existence and observance, which, in such and so short a history, ought to be expected; that in the deliverance from Egypt, considered as a means to its appropriate end, it, with its connected privileges and rights, was the great question at issue, and the very reason of the deliverance; that it was not originally given as a memorial of that deliverance, nor in the wilderness; that the fact of God's not having made the same covenant with the fathers, as with those he brought out of Egypt, no more proves that the fathers had not the Sabbath, with the law of its observance, than that they were without every other command of the decalogue; and, finally, that the observance of the Sabbath, as a standing ordinance, became a sign between Jehovah and



the Hebrews only by virtue of its connection with creation, as a memorial of that event; and, therefore, that the fact of its being such a sign only proves it to have existed from the first, and to have come down, from age to age, as, every where and at all times, the same great distinctive badge of the worshippers of Jehovah. In prosecuting the argument, I remark,

2. The Sabbath is spoken of in the decalogue as an *institution previously existing*, and is there, as well as in the prophets, incorporated with other laws admitted to be of original and ceaseless obligation. Without expanding the argument, I observe, (1.) It is the only law of the ten, that is claimed to be merely Jewish. (2.) It is a part of that code which the Savior declared (Matt. v. 17, 18) should never pass away. (3.) It is coupled often (e. g. Is. lviii.) with the doing of justice and judgment, and letting the oppressed go free — duties which all admit to be of unchanging and ceaseless obligation. (4.) The term “Remember” is indicative of its preëxistence. But without laying stress upon the mere phraseology, if the law, “Thou shalt not steal,” was evidence of preëxisting rights of property, and not of the original institution of those rights; if the law, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” argued with equal clearness a preëxisting marriage institution, with its conjugal and filial relations, and not their original establishment; and so of the other laws of the decalogue, if their grand object was, as is admitted, not to institute their respective rights and institutions as new, but only to guard them as old and permanent ones, why must not the same be true of the law of the Sabbath?

3. *Ancient testimony* confirms the doctrine of the

institution of the Sabbath at creation. Writers, some of whom lived more than a thousand years before the Christian era, speak of the division of time into weeks, and of the special observance of the seventh day of the week, as a season for diversions or the offering of sacrifices to their gods, as facts existing among various heathen nations. The following is a specimen of their testimony:—

*Homer* says, “Afterwards came the seventh, the sacred day.”

*Hesiod* says, “The seventh day is holy.”

*Callimachus* speaks of the seventh day as holy.

*Lucian* says, “The seventh day is given to school-boys as a holiday.”

*Porphyry* says, “The Phenicians consecrated one day in seven as holy.”

*Josephus* says, “There is no city, either of Greeks or barbarians, or any other nation, where the religion of the Sabbath is not known.”

*Grotius* says, “That the memory of the creation being performed in seven days, was preserved not only among the Greeks and Italians, but among the Celts and Indians, all of whom divided their time into weeks.”

*Eusebius* says, “Almost all the philosophers and poets acknowledge the seventh day as holy.”

Similar testimonies might be added, showing that a division of time into weeks obtained also among the Assyrians, Egyptians, Romans, Gauls, Britons, and Germans. Now, situated as many of these nations were in respect to the Jews, and prevailing as the customs in question did at so early a period among them, it is manifest that they could not have been derived from

the Jews after the time of Moses. They must have had an earlier origin. Besides, is it supposable that all these nations, if they had the opportunity, would have copied the custom from the hated Jews? Never. The only rational solution is this — that the Sabbath was instituted at creation; that with it began the division of time into weeks; that as men multiplied, and fell off to the worship of idols, they still carried with them, from age to age, this septenary division of time, and, to a greater or less extent, a perverted observance of the seventh day itself. When, therefore, we find this division of time among the nations, and the seventh day itself in some cases a special holiday for the children, and in others a season for offerings and feasts to idols, we have in these facts the relics and the perverted observances of an institution established at creation, observed by the patriarchs, transmitted by them to the nations, and, in its unperverted observance, designed to be a badge in all time of the worshippers of Jehovah as the only true God.

4. *The original design* of the Sabbath makes it equally manifest that it was instituted at creation, and is perpetually binding. This design is threefold: — (1.) to commemorate the fact of creation by Jehovah; (2.) to afford a period of needful rest to man and beast from the ordinary labors of life; and, (3.) to afford an opportunity for spiritual instruction, improvement, and worship. That these three elements entered originally into the very nature and design of the Sabbath, is obvious from what has already been said. It was (Gen. ii. 2, 3, and Ex. xx. 11) *because* the Lord made the world in six days, and rested on the seventh, that he blessed and hallowed, or set it

apart as a season of religious rest and worship. It was that their children, strangers, servants, and beasts, (Deut. v. 14,) "might rest as well as they," and (Ex. xxiii. 12) "be refreshed," that the Hebrews were strictly enjoined to keep the Sabbath, and (Ex. xx. 10) "not do any work" thereon. And the whole arrangement together was, that parent, child, servant, and stranger, might alike enjoy a season of religious rest, improvement, and worship. As a *memorial of creation* by Jehovah, its standing observance was a standing testimony that the world was made by him, and not by idols; that he, therefore, was the only true God, and that those who observed the day were his worshippers. It thus chronicled the true origin of the world, and was, in its very nature, a distinctive badge of the worshippers of Jehovah. As *affording a period of rest* from the ordinary labors of life, the standing observance of the Sabbath was a standing provision to meet those physical necessities of man and beast, which are not met by the return of day and night. As *affording a period, set apart, sacredly, to spiritual instruction, improvement, and worship*, it was just such a standing provision as the case required to meet the demands of man's spiritual being. In either aspect of its design, then, that design proves conclusively that the Sabbath was instituted at creation, and that, in all its sacredness of obligation, it is to live and be binding on man while man lives on earth. If, as a chronicler of creation, and a badge of faith to distinguish the worshippers of Jehovah from those of idols, there was a reason for the Sabbath in the time of Moses, that reason is equally valid for its establishment at creation, and its continuance,

as an institution, to the end of time. If, as a season of rest and worship, to meet the demands of man's physical and spiritual being, there was a reason for it then, that reason had equal force from the beginning, and will have to the end of time — as long as man remains man. Take which aspect of its design you will, and in each and all of them you can find no period of man's existence, from the creation onward, in which the reason for the Sabbath, growing out of its design, has not existed, and will not continue to exist, in full and unabated force. What, then, is the inference? Just what it is in respect to the marriage institution and the laws of its observance. Just what it is in respect to the rights of property, person, and life, and the laws of their observance — *manente ratione, manet ipsa lex* — *the reason of the law remaining, the law itself remains*. Or, to suit the maxim to the case, the reason for the law existing always, the law itself exists always, and, beginning therefore with the race, exists for the race, and is to end only with the race, in its present state of being. Such is the conclusion of sound philosophy and common sense.

5. I observe, then, finally, that there is a *permanent demand for the Sabbath, in the nature, relations, and necessities of man*; and, therefore, a demand for its institution at creation, and its continuance to the end of time. The argument might be expanded at great length. My design, however, requires brevity. I remark, then,

(1.) Experience shows that the Sabbath is demanded by the *physical necessities* of man. It proves that men, and all laboring animals, whether their



labor be mental or bodily, or both, need at least one day in seven for rest from their ordinary labors — that they will live longer and do more, in the same period, with it than without it. Two testimonies, as specimens of a thousand similar ones, must suffice.

On the 22d of June, 1839, A Committee on Vice and Immorality, of the Pennsylvania Legislature, made a report relative to the suspension of labor on the public improvements in that state, on the Sabbath. The committee refer to certain petitions that had been received on the subject, and say, —

“They (the petitioners) assert, as the result of their own experience, that both man and beast can do more work by resting one day in seven, than by working the whole seven; and your committee feel free to confess that their experience as farmers, business men, or legislators, corresponds with the assertion.”

In the year 1838, Dr. Parre, an eminent physician in London, of forty years' practice, gave the following testimony before a committee of the British parliament: —

“The use of the Sabbath, medically speaking, is that of a day of *rest*. It is a day of compensation for the inadequate restorative power of the body under continual labor and excitement. A physician always has respect to the restorative power, because, if once this be lost, his healing office is at an end. The ordinary exertions of man run down the circulation every day of his life; and the first general law of nature, by which God prevents man from destroying himself, is the alternating of day with night, that repose may succeed action. But though night ap-

parently equalizes the circulation well, yet it does not sufficiently restore its balance for the attainment of a long life. Hence one day in seven, by the bounty of Providence, is thrown in as a day of compensation, to perfect, by its repose, the animal system. The Sabbatical institution is not simply a precept partaking of the nature of a political institution, but it is to be numbered among the natural duties, if the preservation of life be admitted to be a duty, and the premature destruction of it a suicidal act. This is said simply as a physician, without any respect at all to the theological question. I have found it essential to my own well-being, as a medical man, to abridge my labors on the Sabbath to what is actually necessary. I have frequently observed the premature death of physicians from continued exertion. In warm climates, and in active service, this is painfully apparent. I have advised the clergyman, in lieu of his Sabbath, to rest one day in the week; it forms a continual prescription of mine. I have seen many destroyed by their duties on that day. I would say, further, that, quitting the grosser evils of mere animal living from over-stimulation, and undue exercise of body, the working of the mind in one continual train of thought, is the destruction of life in the most distinguished classes of society, and that senators themselves need reform in that respect. I have seen many of them destroyed by neglecting this economy of life."

(2.) Experience shows that the Sabbath is demanded, in like manner, by the *moral necessities* of man. Man is naturally a *religious being*, and, as such, ever has had, and ever will have, some object of religious respect and reverence. If he do not worship and adore the true God, the very elements of his being drive him to some false god. Skeptics may deny this; but in the very homage they themselves occa-

sionally or annually pay to the bones or the birthday of some sainted unbeliever, they are a proof to themselves, that man was *made* to reverence and worship some superior; that such homage and worship are among the *native elements of his being*; and that adore and worship some God, true or false, he always must and will. Of course religious instruction, improvement, and worship, of some kind, are among the permanent and ceaseless demands of his being. These he must have, and these, true or false, he will have. But he cannot have them without occasional or stated times for it.

Moreover, man is also naturally a *social being*. The social in his nature is indeed one of its most powerful elements. You can never instruct, elevate, and fire, the man more effectually than when you take advantage of the social within him. Religious instruction, improvement, and worship, then, to address themselves to the whole man, and be most effective, must be of a public and social character, as well as private. Of course there must be public assemblies — “not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is.” And these, that people may know when to come together, must be held at stated and regular times. In the social and the religious of man, then, we have a permanent and ceaseless demand for the regular social opportunities and privileges of the Sabbath. Wherever this demand is met by the existence and due observance of the Sabbath, we ought to expect, as its legitimate result, the highest condition of spiritual improvement and welfare. And, on the other hand, without any such anticipation, if we find, as the result of actual experience, that where

the Sabbath does exist, and is truly observed, man's spiritual welfare is most effectually promoted, we have in that fact the *proof* that there *is* such a demand in the very nature and necessities of his being. For if the demand do not exist, — if it do not lie imbedded in the very nature of man, and the laws of his being, — then the Sabbath, with its opportunities and observances, must conflict with that nature, and do violence to those laws, and, doing so, must injure rather than benefit man, and make him worse instead of better.

What, then, are the facts? Is the moral and spiritual condition of those *communities* where there is no Sabbath, or only a perverted one, in advance of those where there is one, and one observed according to its true spirit and intent? Let universal experience answer. Are those *individuals* who truly keep the Sabbath in a worse spiritual condition than those who do not? Are they less ready to do good to the bodies and souls of their fellow-men? When Great Britain gave freedom to eight hundred thousand slaves, was it the Sabbath or the anti-Sabbath men that roused her to that deed of mercy, and compelled her to carry it through? Was it the Sabbath or the anti-Sabbath men that originated and that now sustain the great work of missions among the heathen, and indeed among the destitute at home? The mission at the Sandwich Islands has converted a heathen to a Christian people. It is, moreover, so far as the missionaries are concerned, an anti-slavery mission. What non-Sabbath man, since he became such, ever has, or ever intends to lift a finger for its support? Or, if the plea be, that such support cannot be rendered without lending a sanction to the corrupt channels through

which that mission now receives support, then where are the missions, at home or abroad, originated and sustained by no-Sabbath men themselves? Nay, among all the religious visits ever made, and all the great reforms ever attempted, by no-Sabbath men or women, when or where has one of them ever made a religious visit to a heathen community, or attempted a reform on heathen ground? And where are the regenerated and disenthralled communities that have sprung into being as the result of such labors of love? The command of the Savior, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," has been as distinctly before, and as imperiously, binding on them as on others. Yet when and where have they even begun or attempted to obey it, in respect to the entire heathen world? The History of Missions, I believe, has yet to chronicle the event.

Or to vary the test, man, according to the Scriptures, is "dead in trespasses and sins." To be saved he "must be born again." Now, whatever may be the views of different individuals in regard to the nature of this new birth, all agree that it is such a spiritual renovation as inspires the man with habitual respect, reverence, and affection for God; such as reclaims the vicious, reforms the intemperate, and makes the indolent industrious, and the dishonest honest. To effect it is therefore the best thing that can be done for the spiritual well-being of man, either here or hereafter. Now, there are not a few of the believers in the Sabbath who can point to their own labors and instructions on that day as the means of thus renovating and reclaiming their fellow-men. They can point you to individuals, in instances not a few, who will stand up



as "brands plucked from the burning," and as "living epistles known and read of all men," and testify before all to the healthful and reclaiming influence of the Sabbath. Yes, there are thousands on thousands in this land who owe to the Sabbath, with its precious privileges and instructions, all that they are of character and of destiny, both for this world and for that to come, and who, if called upon, would so testify. Where, now, are the individuals that have been so renovated and reclaimed by men of the other views? Where are the debauchees, and the profligates, and the swearers, and the gamblers, and the thieves, and the liars, and the drunkards, once "dead in trespasses and sins," but now "born again" and reclaimed, and ready to stand up and testify that they have been plucked from ruin by the no-Sabbath men and the no-Sabbath views? Are the men—is the man so renovated and reclaimed to be found? I, at least, have yet to see him.

Or, passing from their disposition to do good to others, suppose we examine the spiritual condition of the men themselves. Are they who believe in and keep the Sabbath, more disposed than others to evil, more bent upon their own indulgence, more reckless of their neighbors' rights, reputation, and property,—in a word, more bold and frequent in the commission of crimes, that war upon society, and set human and divine law alike at defiance? Let us hear the witnesses.

Sir Matthew Hale said, "That of the persons who were convicted of capital crimes while he was on the bench, he found only a few who would not confess that they began their career of wickedness by a neg-

lect of the duties of the Sabbath, and by vicious conduct on that day."

In 1838, before the committee of the British parliament, the Rev. David Ruel, who had been twenty-eight years chaplain of prisons in London, and who had had, on a low calculation, one hundred thousand prisoners under his care, testified as follows:—"I do not recollect a single case of capital offence where the party has not been a Sabbath-breaker; and in many cases, they have assured me that Sabbath-breaking was the first step in the course of crime. Indeed, I may say, in reference to prisoners of all classes, that in nineteen cases out of twenty, they are persons who not only neglected the Sabbath, but all the other ordinances of religion."

Such testimony might be multiplied to any extent. What does it prove? Obviously, that there is that in the Sabbath and its right observance which just meets the physical and spiritual necessities of man, and which, *because* it meets these *demands of his being*, makes it a most effectual promoter of his physical and spiritual welfare. And what is this but saying, in other terms, that there is, in the very nature, relations, and necessities of man, a permanent and ceaseless demand for the Sabbath? And now, with this demand distinctly before him, and with a heart always intent on man's best good, is it to be believed, that God did not provide for meeting it by the institution of the Sabbath at the outset, or that he does not mean to provide for it in future by its continuance to the end of time? By no means. The truth is, the Sabbath, as an institution,—not the particular day of its observance,—is as really founded in the

nature and relations of man, and grows as naturally out of his physical and moral necessities, as does that of marriage. Both must have had their origin with the race, and must be equally designed to continue, while the race does in its present state of being. Indeed, the laws of their observance, as we have seen, no less than those which guard the rights of conscience, property, person, and life, are equally a part of the common law of man, and, as such, binding on all, in all time. Can it be doubted, then, that the Sabbath, as an institution, is perpetually binding?

## CHANGE OF THE DAY.

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### CHAPTER IX.

#### STATEMENT OF THE QUESTION, AND PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

WE are now prepared to prosecute the second question at issue in this discussion — viz. *Has any particular day been set apart, by divine appointment, for the observance of the Sabbath, and if so, what day?*

All agree that, originally, the seventh day of the week was so set apart. But from some cause the Christian world has generally fallen away from the observance of the seventh to that of the first. The question, therefore, practically assumes this form — viz. *Has the first day of the week been set apart, by divine appointment, to be observed, in place of the seventh, as the Sabbath? Has God authorized the change?* That he has, I shall attempt to prove. Before doing so, however, I wish to make a few preliminary remarks. And,

1. The change of the day is a question entirely distinct from that of the perpetual obligation of the Sabbath as an institution. The *day* selected for its observance may remain the same or be changed. And

so may the *mode* of its observance — provided only that its true intent and great end be preserved. But whether changed or not, is one question. Whether there is such an *institution* perpetually existing and perpetually binding on all, is another. And the two questions are entirely distinct, the one from the other. Therefore,

2. If God has *not* authorized a change of the day from the seventh to the first, then the seventh is the Sabbath, and is to be kept as such. Should we fail in our proof of a divine warrant for the change, it will not follow that there is no Sabbath. - It will only follow that the seventh day of the week is to be kept as Sabbath instead of the first. You must admit the change, and keep the first day of the week as Sabbath, with all the sacredness of original obligation, or go back to the seventh, and keep that. Change or no change, the Sabbath, as an institution, remains the same, the law of its observance as sacredly binding as ever, and the man who breaks it as palpable a violator of the divine command. Decide the question of the day, then, as you will, the institution and the obligation to keep it remain. If you reject the first, you are shut up to the seventh as your Sabbath. In either event, you are cut off from no-Sabbathism, and are bound to observe one day or the other, or rank yourself a violator of divine command.

3. If God *has* authorized a change of day, that does not change or obliterate the obligation to keep it holy to the Lord. Be "Sabbath-day" the seventh or the first, the obligation, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," is the same — applying equally to the one as to the other. In other terms, there is a plain distinction between the Sabbath, as an institution, and the



particular day selected for its observance. This is obvious from what has been said. Besides, but for such distinction, the command must run, "Remember the *seventh* day," &c. — thus making the institution and the day identical; or, at least, laying as much stress on the one as on the other. But the form of phraseology now is, "Remember the *Sabbath*-day to keep it holy." Here we have the sum total of the command, but not a word yet in respect to the particular day of the week, which is "*Sabbath*-day." And it is only as God proceeds to direct *how* it is to be kept, that we learn what the particular day is; and then the specification comes in only incidentally, or as a matter of course. No stress is laid upon the particular day of the week, as if that were vital to the institution. The great burden of the injunction is, to keep "*Sabbath*-day" holy, be it what day of the week it may; and the great object of the specification is, to show what is meant by so keeping it, not to point out or lay stress upon the particular day, as if that, rather than some other, were essential to the existence of the institution itself. Of course, a change of the day can make no change in the institution itself, or in the obligation to keep it. These, in all essentials, remain the same — perpetually existing and perpetually binding, whatever the changes which God may authorize in respect to the time or mode of their observance. Indeed,

4. The Sabbath, as an *institution*, cannot be abrogated. Founded as it is, like the marriage institution, in the nature, relations, and necessities of man, God can no more abrogate it, and the law of its observance, than he can that of marriage, with its conjugal and filial relations, and the laws of their observance. Both

stand upon the same footing. Both grow alike out of man's nature, relations, and necessities. Both are equally the ceaseless demand of his being. The laws of their observance, as we have seen, are equally a part of universal common law. They are alike, in precept and in penalty, the intrenchments of the Almighty, thrown around their respective institutions for their sacred observance and ceaseless perpetuity. In these, therefore, there can, in the nature of things, be no change. The institutions, and the obligation to observe them, in their general scope and spirit, must stand to the end of time. But,

5. While no change can take place in the Sabbath, as an institution, or in the obligation to observe it, God may, and we should naturally expect that he would, regulate the time and manner of its observance; that he would select such a day, and direct it to be kept in such manner as to make it best answer its great design as a season of religious rest, improvement, and worship. Such *selection of the day* is of course of the nature of a *positive* institution, and is subject, like every thing else of that nature, to change or abrogation, whenever there are good and sufficient reasons for it. Therefore,

6. Whenever such reasons exist, we should expect the change as a matter of course. Certain reasons determined the selection, at the outset, of the seventh as "Sabbath-day." If, now, in the course of events, other and superior reasons come into existence, in favor of the selection of the first in place of the seventh, a change of day is of course to be expected. Indeed, the *reasons* for such change existing, we have in that fact not only a warrant for expecting it, but presumptive evidence that it has actually been made.

7. If any change in the day has been made, it was made, as all admit, by Jesus Christ, or by his authority.

8. Christ had the *right* to change it, if he saw fit. (1.) He *claimed* such right. On a certain occasion, (Mark ii. 23—28,) the Pharisees complained of the disciples as Sabbath-breakers, because, in going through the cornfields on the Sabbath, they had plucked and eaten some of the ears. Christ justified them, not by asserting that there was, or was to be, no Sabbath, but by showing that what they did was not a violation of it, according to its original and true intent. His argument was, First, they have only done a work of necessity and mercy, and such a work, like David's eating the show-bread, is perfectly lawful on the Sabbath. For, Second, the Sabbath was never meant to exclude such works. "The Sabbath was made for (*dia ton*, for the sake of) man, and not man for (*dia to*, for the sake of) the Sabbath." Man was made first, and then the Sabbath made to fit him, and subserve his welfare, and not the Sabbath first, and he made to fit and subserve it. Its grand design, then, is to meet man's necessities, not to set them aside, or to meet one class of them at the expense of another. It *assumes* that the lower and ordinary demands of his being for necessary food and raiment are met; and it *then* comes in, not to set these aside, but to meet other demands, and especially the higher and holier ones of his spiritual existence. In a word, it was meant to bless the whole man, and man every where. Moreover, (Matt. xii. 6—8,) "I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the temple. And if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man," the

Master of these whom you so unjustly accuse, "is Lord even of the Sabbath-day," and, as such, can authorize them to pluck the corn to satisfy their hunger, even if, as it is not, it were unlawful to do so without it. As Lord of the Sabbath, I have and claim the right to regulate its observance. So that, in either case, my disciples are not violators of the Sabbath. Such, plainly, was the drift of his argument. But a right, as Lord of the Sabbath, to regulate its observance, is plainly a right, for good and sufficient reasons, to change the day, or make any other change in respect to it, not incompatible with its continued existence and obligation.

Besides, (2.) *It was Christ, who*, as Creator of the world, *originally instituted the Sabbath*, and selected the seventh as the day for its observance. This is obvious from several passages of Scripture. In Heb. i. 10, God is represented as saying to the Son, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands." See also v. 2 — "by whom also he made the worlds." The apostle John declares, (John i. 3,) "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." Here we have it, in as distinct terms as possible, that Jesus Christ was the Creator of the world. Whether he did this with derived or underived power, as the inferior or the equal of the Father, alters not the fact that he did it. It was therefore he, who, as Creator, rested from the work of creation on the seventh day, and because he so rested, afterwards set it apart as a day of religious rest and worship for man. As Creator, then, he was *original* Lord of the Sabbath. He selected the day for its ob-

servance in the beginning. Of course his right is perfect, for good and sufficient reasons, to select another day. And if he has done it, or authorized it to be done, it has been done by divine authority—by the same authority, in fact, which originally selected the seventh day.

9. The change which has actually taken place, (whether authorized or not remains to be seen,) is *just such a one as the case allows, and as we should expect* in the event of any change. It leaves the nature, design, and obligation of the Sabbath as a day of religious rest, improvement, and worship, the same as they were before. It makes no change in the office of the Sabbath as a “*sign*” between God and his people, except to enhance its significance. In its true and hearty observance, the Sabbath is as distinctive a badge of God’s people now as it ever was. The change in the day of its observance, then, is only a change of its character as a memorial—it being now a memorial of Christ’s work of redemption, instead of his work of creation. This is just such a change as the case allows, and as we should expect in the event of any. It can take place without affecting at all the existence and perpetuity of the Sabbath as an institution. That remains the same.

10. The nature of the case *demand*s just such a change as has actually taken place, and is so far presumptive evidence of its having taken place by divine authority. For, the reason for such change existing, why should not God authorize it? The Sabbath was originally a memorial of creation. But the work of redemption is one of a vastly higher character and greater importance, inasmuch as it looks more directly



to the well-being of the soul, and is fitted to add higher glory to the Godhead. So the Bible regards it. Hence, in comparing the one with the other, it predicts a time when creation shall be comparatively forgotten in the superior glories of redemption. "Behold," (Isa. lxxv. 17,) "I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." Here, then, in this fact we have a reason demanding the change in question. As a memorial of creation completed, the seventh was the appropriate day. But in redemption completed we have a work of superior greatness and glory. Why should it not be chronicled by its appropriate day? Plainly the demand for it is of greater force than was that for the original selection of the seventh. Is it to be supposed that God has met the demand in the one case, and not in the other? By no means.

## CHAPTER X.

### NATURE OF THE ARGUMENT FOR A CHANGE OF THE DAY.

WE are now prepared to prosecute the inquiry whether Christ made or authorized a change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week.

Great stress is usually laid here upon the production of some express precept, declaring in so many terms that Christ made or authorized the change. "Give us your text" — "give us your text" — "To the law and to the testimony," is the confident and supposed unanswerable demand.

True, the question is purely one of fact, and, as such, is to be authoritatively settled only by an appeal "to the law and to the testimony." But the absence of a text of the kind demanded, does by no means prove, that the evidence of the law or the testimony is wanting. Moreover, if the evidence of the law were wanting, that of the testimony, if clear, would be conclusive. In conducting the appeal, then, "to the law and to the testimony," there are three forms of the argument, either of which is conclusive of the fact of the change, and of a divine warrant for it.

(1.) If we find an express precept declaring the change made or authorized, we have "the law." If

we then find, in the history of Christ and his early disciples, distinct traces of a corresponding practice, we have "the testimony;" and in the two united, we have the evidence of "law and testimony." (2.) If we find an express precept affirming the *right* to change the day, we have "the law." If, then, we find actual traces of such a change in the conduct of those who had this right, we have "the testimony;" and in the two united we have the evidence again of "law and testimony" both. And, (3.) if we can find no express precept of either kind, yet if we can trace the fact of the actual change, through witness after witness, from the present time up to the primitive Christians and the apostles themselves, we have, then, the evidence of "the testimony;" and in the character of the apostles and early disciples, we have the proof indisputable that such a change was never made by them without the authority of their Master for it. And in this way, too, we get, in the end, the evidence of "law and testimony" both. "To the law and to the testimony," then, be our appeal.

That we have a precept or a passage saying, in so many terms, that Christ or the apostles made the change in question, is not pretended. No more have we a passage saying, in so many terms, that men are moral agents, or that they have equal rights, or that slave-holding, slave-trading, spirit-dealing, and the like, are wicked. Are these things therefore not wicked? Are men machines, and not endowed with equal rights? By no means. The mere want of a passage of the kind proves nothing. There may be other proof as conclusive as that of such a passage. The

first form of the appeal "to the law and to the testimony" is not, therefore, vital to the argument.

The third form of it, though satisfactory, has less force than the second, and is so obvious that it does not need expansion. It is simply this — the first day of the week has been observed as Sabbath from the apostolic age. This is proved by authentic history. There is no evidence any where that its observance in the ages immediately succeeding the apostolic, was an innovation on apostolic and primitive custom. The necessary conclusion is, that it was so observed by the apostles and first disciples themselves. But they were so scrupulous of the commands of their Lord, that they would never have set up such observance of the day, except on his permission or by his authority. Dismissing the first and third forms of the appeal, then, here, we rest the argument on the second.

## CHAPTER XI.

### CHRIST'S SANCTION OF THE SABBATH AND ITS CHANGE.

UNDER the second form of the appeal "to the law and to the testimony," the first witness that we propose to examine is the Lord Jesus Christ. What is the evidence of the law and the testimony in his case?

1. Christ had and claimed the right to regulate generally the observance of the Sabbath. This we have already seen. "The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day." But this right of regulation generally was of course a right to change the day, if he saw fit. Here, then, we have "the law." Christ's example, or actual conduct, will give us his "testimony." I remark, then,

2. Christ's example, as Lord of the Sabbath, is proof that it was no part of his design to abolish the Sabbath, but to restore it to its original and true intent, and to change the day of its observance, so as to make it commemorative of his work of redemption. What was that example? Answer—Before his death and resurrection, i. e. up to the period of the full introduction of the gospel dispensation, he carefully observed the seventh day as the Sabbath. After that period, beginning with the resurrection itself, he



specially honored the first day of the week, as the religious day for his disciples.

(1.) That he so honored the *seventh* day is most manifest. Before the gospel dispensation was fully introduced, it became him (Matt. iii. 15) "to fulfil all righteousness" according to the law of Moses. Hence he was circumcised, and submitted to other ceremonial observances which were then in force. Of course he would not fail to keep the seventh day as Sabbath. Hence various occasions are mentioned in the evangelists upon which he attended the regular worship of God in the synagogues on the Sabbath — thus discharging the chief duty of the day. Indeed, we learn, (Luke iv. 16; comp. also v. 31,) that "he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and, *as his custom was*, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read." This is decisive of his observance of the Sabbath; and also of the fact, that it was not an occasional matter merely, but his *regular habit*. And this continued, for aught that appears, to the day of his death.

Moreover, when accused, as he frequently was, of violating the Sabbath, he never plead in vindication, that, as Lord of the Sabbath, he was about to set it aside, and make all days alike, and that *therefore* he might do the things alleged with impunity. Not a word of this. On the contrary, his plea always was, that, according to its original and true intent, the things done were not a violation of the day. He always plead to his innocence of the charge, but never based that plea on the ground that, as Lord of the Sabbath, he was about to abrogate it. Nor, indeed, did he ever, in any connection, give a *hint* of such abro-

gation. But how could this be, if abrogation were his design? With the question fairly brought to the issue, as it repeatedly was by the charges of Sabbath-breaking preferred against him, how, if abrogation were his design, could he fail to meet it by saying so? Was he wont to cover up designs and dodge questions thus?

*Objection.* But, if the Savior, it is urged, was thus observant of the Sabbath, and meant to perpetuate it under the gospel dispensation, how happens it that he was so constantly in trouble with the Jews for breaking it, and that he never enjoined its observance upon them?

*The Answer* is obvious; and will make it still more apparent, that the abrogation of the Sabbath was no part of Christ's design. Well (Matt. xv. 6—9) did Isaiah prophesy of the Jews at this period, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. And in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Their whole religion had become one of mere external observances. Hence they had lost sight of the real scope and spirit of almost every command of God, and, in multiplied instances, (v. 6,) had "made the *commandment* of God of none effect" by their "traditions" touching the *manner* of its observance. This was preëminently true in respect to the Sabbath. Thus, in respect to the prohibition of work on the Sabbath, the rabbinical doctors divided works into principal and secondary. Each principal work had its long list of secondary ones under it, the doing of any of which was a violation of the Sabbath. Thus, to

grind was a principal work. All dividing of things before united in their nature came under this head. The rubbing of the ears of corn was, of course, according to this tradition, a violation of the Sabbath. In this way the doctors enumerated some thirty-nine principal works, with their subordinates. The first eight of them were sowing, ploughing, reaping, binding, threshing, winnowing, cleaning, grinding.\* Among the particular things which might or might not be done, were the following: A man might not thresh — therefore he might not walk on the grass, which was a kind of threshing. A man might not hunt on the Sabbath — therefore he might not catch a flea while it hops about, as that would be a kind of hunting. Again, he might not carry burdens on the Sabbath. Accordingly, though he might fill a trough with water that his beasts might *come* and drink, he might not *carry* it to the place where they were. Of course, the poor man that carried his bed, after he was healed, was a Sabbath-breaker. Equally unlawful was it, according to some of the rabbins, to heal or minister to the sick on the Sabbath. A man with a diseased eye, might plaster it on the Sabbath, for the sake of ease and pleasure, but not for the purpose of healing.† And the decision of the school of Shammai was, “Let no one console the sick or visit the mourning on the Sabbath-day.”‡ Of course, the Jews watched Jesus to see whether he would heal on the Sabbath, and charged him with breaking it, when he did so. It is most obvious, then, that the

\* Townsend's Notes, vol. ii. p. 86.

† Gurney, on the Sabbath, pp. 59, 60.

‡ Townsend's Notes, vol. ii. p. 87.

Jews, at that time, had lost sight of the true spiritual and original intent of the Sabbath. It is equally clear, that just in proportion as they had done so, they had become strict, scrupulous, and superstitious, in respect to its external observance. Indeed, to such lengths did they go in this strictness, that, (1 Macc. ii. 34—38,) when Antiochus Epiphanes oppressed Jerusalem, B. C. 168, a thousand Jews, who had fled to the wilderness, allowed themselves to be cut to pieces; solely because their enemy attacked them on the Sabbath. And afterwards, though self-defence in case of actual assault was allowed, it was not deemed lawful to do any thing on that day to impede an enemy's works. Hence, when Pompey, the Roman general, at a later period, besieged Jerusalem, he occupied the Sabbath in erecting his works for assault, and, when they were completed, very readily took the city.\* Indeed, even the devout women, that followed Christ to the cross, and thence to the sepulchre, (Luke xxiii. 56,) "returned, and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath-day, according to the commandment." Nor was it until (Luke xxiv. 1—3) the first day of the week had dawned, that they presumed to revisit "the sepul-

\* Josephus (Antiq. b. 14, c. 4, sec. 2, 3) says, "Though our laws give us leave, then, (on the Sabbath,) to defend ourselves against those that begin to fight with us, and assault us, yet they do not permit us to meddle with our enemies while they do any thing else. Which thing, when the Romans understood, on those days which we call Sabbaths, they threw nothing at the Jews, nor came to any pitched battle with them, but raised up their earthen banks, and brought their engines into such forwardness that they might do execution the following days."

chre, bringing the spices which they had prepared " for embalming their Lord. Nay, the very Jews who were ready to imbrue their hands in the blood of innocence, and had actually done it in effecting the crucifixion of Christ, were yet so scrupulous in their observance of the Sabbath, that they would not on any account take the dead bodies of himself and the thieves down from the cross on that day. Hence they besought Pilate (John xix. 31) to hasten and insure their death by breaking their legs, so that they might be taken away before it.

These facts furnish a complete and satisfactory answer to the objection before us. Christ did not reënjoin it upon the Jew to keep the Sabbath. Why? Because no such injunction was needed. The time had not come to enjoin the keeping of the first day as Sabbath, on any one. And as to keeping the seventh, a people who would not kill a flea, or walk on the grass, or minister to the sick, or who would stand still and be hewed to pieces, sooner than violate the day, surely did not need to be told anew that they ought to keep it. Nor did they need any injunctions to keep it with special strictness. On these points they were already over-scrupulous, and needed no new instructions. Of course Christ gave them none.

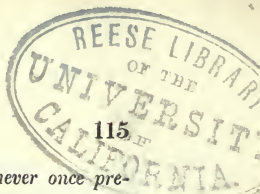
But they *did* need to be recalled to the true nature and original intent of the Sabbath. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. But by their traditions concerning the mode of its observance they had reversed the whole order and design of it. They had lost sight of its true nature and original design, and had practically buried up the



real Sabbath beneath a Sabbath of mere external observances. In many ways, they had actually made the command of God—the real Sabbath—of none effect through their traditions. What, then, should be done? If the Sabbath was to be abrogated, the thing to be done was to assail it and its corruptions in the lump, as a thing of nought, and soon to be done away—the sooner the better. Did Christ do that? No. But if it were not to be abrogated, but perpetuated, then the thing to be done was, to separate it from its perversions, that, being so separated, the *institution* might live while its *perversions* were dead. But this could be done only by flying in the face of those traditions that gave birth to the perversions. And this is just what the Savior did. Had they, by their traditions, so perverted the law of the Sabbath as to make works of real necessity and mercy a violation of the day? Like himself, he boldly denies the authority of such traditions, and tramples on every custom growing out of them. Must no burdens be carried, even in a case of necessity or mercy, as in ministering to the sick, or bringing them to be healed? He heals the poor man, at the pool of Bethesda, (John v. 5—17,) and bids him take his bed and walk. And when they complain, and charge him with a violation of the Sabbath in doing so, his short, impressive, and authoritative answer is, “‘My Father worketh’ such works ‘hitherto, and I work’ the same. If he does works of such a character, why should not I?”—Again, must no cures be wrought or attempted on the Sabbath? In repeated instances, he tramples the tradition under foot. He heals the man (Matt. xii. 10—13) with the

withered hand, and forestalls their clamor, by showing his enemies, that on their own premises, "it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days." He heals the woman (Luke xiii. 10—17) "which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself." And when the ruler of the synagogue complains, and says to the people, "There are six days in which men ought to work; in them, therefore, come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day," Christ's bold and indignant reply, is, "Thou hypocrite! doth not each one of you loose his ox or his ass from the stall and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day?" — And again, must pressing hunger go unsupplied, rather than meet its demands by the simple process of rubbing out a few ears of grain, as the disciples pass along? He justifies them in the deed, and tells their accusers, (Matt. xii. 7,) that if they had known what this meaneth, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice," they would never have been so ignorant of the true intent of the Sabbath, and such sticklers for the outward forms of its observance as to have condemned the guiltless — that "the Sabbath (Mark ii. 27) was made for man, and not," as their traditions would make it, "man for the Sabbath."

By this process the Savior effectually *separated the Sabbath from its perversions*. True, it brought him — and no wonder that it did — into continual trouble with the scribes and Pharisees as a Sabbath-breaker. This is just what we should expect. But amid all their col-



lisions with him on the subject, they *never once pretended* that he held all days alike, nor that he designed or wished to do the Sabbath away. But would they not have done it, had such been the fact? Yet they did not. The whole controversy was, not whether the Sabbath was, or was to be, but, assuming this, what constitutes a violation of it—how is it to be kept? The truth is, the whole effort of the Savior was to separate the Sabbath, as such, from its perversions, not to abolish it, or to make all days alike. But why such separation, except that the *institution* might live while its *perversions* were dead? It was to rescue the Sabbath from the perversions of prevalent traditions, and give it back to the people in its true nature and original design. Why? Plainly that it might live and go down, like marriage, as a permanent institution, to the end of time. Indeed, the work which the Savior did for the Sabbath was precisely that which he did (Matt. v. and elsewhere) for the marriage institution, with its conjugal and filial relations, and the laws of their observance, and for other laws of acknowledged authority and perpetuity under the gospel. *It was a work, too, which he never did for circumcision or for any other institution or ordinance, purely Jewish, and not designed to continue under the gospel dispensation.* When he rescued the marriage institution, and the law of life, from the perversions of Jewish tradition, did he mean to hand them, so rescued, down to us, as of permanent existence and perpetual obligation?—as part and parcel of the gospel itself? What less than this could he mean, when, at the risk of life as a Sabbath-breaker, he so rescued the Sabbath? Indeed, what was such a rescue of it

but an emphatic injunction to observe it, as rescued? While this view, then, solves the objection, how obvious does it make it, that it was no part of Christ's design to abrogate the Sabbath, but rather his design to perpetuate it!

But, (2.) having thus rescued the Sabbath, as an institution, from its perversions, and having honored the seventh as Sabbath-day up to the time of his death, is there any evidence that, after his resurrection, and the consequent full introduction of the new dispensation, Christ put similar honor on the first day of the week? Luke informs us, (Acts i. 3,) that after his passion he appeared to his disciples, at different times, for the space of forty days, and spake to them "*the things pertaining to the kingdom.*" At some of these interviews, among the things pertaining to the kingdom, Christ either authorized a change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, or he did not. If he did *not*, the reason was, (John xvi. 12, 13,) "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." The business of prescribing the arrangements for the future order and worship of the church, he had already devolved, as we shall see, upon his apostles, as a matter to be specially attended to by them, when, after his departure, the Comforter should come, who was to guide them into all truth, and endue them with power from on high. If, therefore, Christ did not himself make the change in question, during this period of forty days, it was because this was one of the things which belonged, by his express authority, to the apostles to do. And in this case we

are to look, for the first decisive indications of the change, to them and their history, rather than to the conduct and history of Christ himself.

The same is true, if, in the interviews in question, Christ *did* personally authorize the change. For the great object of those interviews plainly was, to make his disciples more fully acquainted with his real character and dignity, to establish beyond all question the fact of his actual resurrection, and to commission and invest them with authority for their future work. Hence, on his way to Emmaus, (Luke xxiv. 27,) "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them, in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself." Hence, in the record of the several interviews, we hear almost nothing in detail of what "the things," of which he spake, "pertaining to the kingdom," were. We have the simple commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, with its accompanying authority. We have, then, a full and minute account of those occurrences and remarks which put the fact of his resurrection and personal identity beyond dispute. And further than this, we have almost no account of what passed at the interviews in question. The great object of the *record*, whatever may have been that of the interviews, was to make clear the fact of the resurrection. This was the great question, — that, indeed, on which hinged every other. To settle this was of course the great object. If, then, in these interviews, Christ did personally authorize the change in question, we are not to expect, in a record so brief, and made for such a purpose, a formal and full-length mention of it, but



only a mention of such occurrences and facts as are in keeping with and not contradictory of it. Such a mention we have.

Previous to his death, as we have seen, Christ was in the regular and habitual observance of the seventh, as Sabbath-day. Afterward, when, by his death and resurrection, the old dispensation was fully at an end, and the new one fully introduced, we never find him in the synagogue or meeting with his disciples for religious purposes on that day. But he did meet with them for such purposes on the first day of the week, and in other ways he specially honored that day. He rose from the dead on that day. Four times, on the same day, he manifested himself to his disciples; first (Matt. xxviii. 9) to the women who held him by the feet and worshipped; then (Luke xxiv. 34) to Peter; then (Luke xxiv. 18—33) to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, when he expounded to them “the things concerning himself,” and was made known to them in the breaking of bread; and, lastly, (John xx. 19—23,) to the ten apostles, when, after showing them his hands and side, and so verifying his resurrection, he said, “As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you,” and, breathing on them, added, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.” In these two interviews, Christ gave the disciples, first, an exposition of the Scriptures concerning himself; next the evidence of his resurrection; then the commission, “as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you;” and then the investment of them with

authority to instruct, and to regulate the order, institutions, and worship of the church under the new dispensation. Now, on the supposition that this was the first of Christian Sabbaths, and that subsequently this day of the week was to be the Sabbath-day of the church, what could be more appropriate to the occasion than such instruction, such a commission, and such an investment of authority from him who was at the same time Head of the church and Lord of the Sabbath? Considered as one whole, what were all these various items but the full and formal introduction of the gospel kingdom? Before, by John the Baptist and others, it had been announced as being "*at hand.*" Now, in the resurrection of its Lord, in his manifestation of himself to his disciples, in his commission of them to act for him, and in his investment of them with the authority named, it had *fully come, and was officially introduced.* It was done, too, on the first day of the week. How fitting to have it done then, if that day was thereafter to be the Sabbath of the church!

Again, if this were the first of Christian Sabbaths, the second would occur on the next first day of the week; and on that day, therefore, we should naturally expect to find Christ and the disciples together again. Such seems to have been the fact. When one event happened a week after another, the Jews sometimes called the whole period "*an eight days*"—including in their reckoning both the days on which the events in question occurred. Accordingly, when we read, (John xx. 26,) "*And after eight days, again his disciples were within,*" &c., there can be little doubt that

it was on the next first day.\* Mr. Gurney thinks that the ascension was on the first day of the week.† And it is quite certain that the descent of the Comforter was upon that day.

The disciples were commanded by their Lord to tarry at Jerusalem until they were "endued with power from on high," being assured, at the same time, that this should be "not many days hence." Then followed the ascension; then, in the exercise of the authority conferred upon them, the appointment of Matthias to the apostleship in the place of Judas; and then the waiting for the promised Comforter. This Comforter was to be to them in the place of Christ. He was to guide them into all truth. He was to

\* Hammond, Gill, Grotius, &c., in loc.; and compare Luke ix. 28 with Matt. xvii. 1, and Mark ix. 2.

† Mr. Gurney says, pp. 78, 79, "The period which elapsed between our Lord's resurrection and ascension, is described as *forty days*. Acts i. 3. This is a period of which frequent mention is made in the sacred history. The flood was forty days upon the earth; Moses was forty days in the mount; Elijah went forty days in the strength of the meat which the angel provided for him; Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness. Now, as the Hebrews were accustomed to reckon their time by weeks, — from Sabbath to Sabbath, — it seems very probable that the term *forty days* denotes a *round* number, and is in fact a mere synonyme for *six Sabbaths* or *weeks*. If so, the ascension took place six weeks after the resurrection, and therefore on the first day of the week. This conclusion is in some measure confirmed by the very fact that the disciples were then assembled; for not only do we find them meeting together on the first day of the week, twice before this event, but we shall presently see that they maintained the same practice *on the very week following*."

qualify them for the work to which Christ had commissioned them. He was to direct them in the exercise of their authority, to instruct and to regulate the order, institutions, and worship of the church. He was to be, in all these respects, the same to them as a present Christ. So that under his guidance their instructions would be as correct, and the order, institutions, and worship, they should prescribe for the church, as wise and authoritative as if they were under the immediate personal guidance of Christ himself. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." This descent of the Holy Ghost on them, like his descent on Christ at his baptism, was their public anointing to the work which Christ began, and which he had now devolved on them to carry out and complete. It was, like his, their official recognition and introduction to it. It was also the formal and public commitment of the work to them, and the pledge that they would do their part of it, as Christ had his, according to the mind and will of God. And all this transpired on the first day of the week — "the Lord's day." Christ's last paschal supper was on the evening of the fifth day of the week. That fifth day was the 14th of the month Nisan, on which the passover was slain. Christ was crucified on the sixth day. The seventh day was of course the second of the feast, and was the day on

which the wave-sheaf was offered to the Lord. Pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16) was fifty days after this. And as this was on the seventh day, the forty-ninth day from that was the seventh Sabbath, and the next, or fiftieth day, was of course the first day of the week. The immediate result of this anointing was, that the apostles, especially Peter, preached with such power, that about three thousand souls were added to the church on that single day. It was emphatically the beginning of days to the infant church. And thus was the first day of the week again honored and blessed of him who was at once Head of the church, and Lord of the Sabbath.

Here, then, to say nothing of the intermediate interviews, we have, in the first instance, the resurrection, the exposition of the Scriptures concerning himself, the evidence of the identity of his resurrection body, the commission of the disciples, and their investment with apostolic authority; and, in the second instance, that of Pentecost, the mission of the Comforter, with all of official recognition and endowment that it involved. And what are all these occurrences, but just what we should expect them to be, on the supposition that Christ meant to honor the first day of the week, as, by way of eminence, the day of religious worship under the new order of things? The events in question had more immediate and direct concern with the establishment and progress of the new religion, than any other. They were, in fact, its official, formal, and full introduction, in the first instance to the disciples, and in the second to the world. Why should they, in both cases, trans-



pire on the first day of the week, except it were that he, who, as Head of the church, was, in these events, officially and fully instituting a new dispensation, was also, as Lord of the Sabbath, instituting a new day as Sabbath-day for his people — a day to be thenceforward observed by them, in distinction from other days, as “**LORD’S DAY**”?

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE SANCTION OF THE APOSTLES AND THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

WHAT is the evidence of the "law and the testimony" in the case of the apostles and primitive disciples? First, what was "THE LAW"?

*Answer.* Christ gave his apostles express authority to regulate the faith, institutions, order, and worship of the church, and declared that whatever they might teach or prescribe in the case should be authoritative and binding. On a certain occasion, (Matt. xvi. 13—19,) Christ inquired of his disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" And when Peter said, in reply, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," he commended him, and declared, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." On another occasion, (Matt. xviii. 18,) when the discipline of the church was the topic of discourse, Christ said to all the apostles, as he had before said to Peter, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Both

these occasions were previous to his death. Afterward, (John xx. 21, 22,) on the evening of the day of his resurrection, he commissioned them to the apostolic work, saying, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." Then, investing them with apostolic authority, "he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

What do these passages of Scripture teach? That they do not teach the Romish doctrine of the supremacy of St. Peter, is obvious; because the same power or authority conferred on him in the first passage, is, in the others, conferred on all the apostles. Equally obvious is it that they did not confer the power of pardoning sin, in the proper sense of that phrase, because that is the prerogative of God only. How, then, are they to be understood? A ready and satisfactory answer is found in the usage of the times and the circumstances of the case.

The phrase "to bind and to loose" was used by the Jews in the sense of to prohibit and to permit, or to teach what is prohibited and what permitted. Thus they said of gathering wood on the Sabbath, "The school of Shammai binds it"—i. e. prohibits it, or teaches that it is prohibited; and "the school of Hillel looses it"—i. e. permits it, or teaches that it is permitted. Lightfoot, in his *Exercitationes* on Matthew, produces many instances of this use of the phrase. Schoetgen, in his *Hor. Heb.* vol. i. p. 145, 6, adds many more—all showing that, according to Jewish usage at the time, to loose and to bind signified to pronounce authoritatively what was lawful

and unlawful, clean and unclean, condemned and allowed, according to Mosaic law. The phrase was manifestly a professional phrase — a kind of theological technic, applied to the rabbis, or teachers whose business it was to expound the law, and well understood as meaning, not only that they taught what was prohibited and what allowed by the law, but that their teaching was authoritative, and therefore binding on the people. Hence the declaration of the Savior, (Matt. xxiii. 2—4,) “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat;” — officially they teach by authority; — “all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe and do, that observe and do; but do not after their works; for they say, and do not. For,” so rigid are they in their exposition and enforcement of the law on others, that “they *bind* heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders,” while, at the same time, they themselves are so lax in its observance, that “they will not move them with one of their fingers.” Here, then, we have this very power of *binding*, recognized by the Savior as residing, in the sense explained, in the scribes and Pharisees; and residing there, not because they exercised it properly, but because they were the occupiers of Moses’ seat, and, therefore, officially, the authorized and authoritative expounders of the law. Of course, while Moses remained in force, it was their official duty and prerogative, under him, to bind and to loose — i. e. (for such is the meaning) *to teach authoritatively what was prohibited and what allowed by Mosaic law.*

But the time was at hand, and in the last case had actually arrived, when Moses was to give place to

Christ, and those whose official business it was to bind and loose under the old dispensation were to be succeeded by those whose official business it should be to bind and to loose under the new. The first passage, then, under consideration, which, with the second, was uttered in anticipation of this change, is as if the Savior had said, "*I am the Christ, the Son of the living God,*" as you, Peter, have confessed. "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And now, as my Father hath thus honored you in giving you a full apprehension of my character and kingdom before your fellow-disciples, I also will honor you in the same manner. "Thou art rock; and upon this rock will I build my church. And I will give unto thee the keys of it." It shall be your high honor to be first in laying its foundations, and in opening the doors of it to the world. As you have been the first to apprehend and confess to me the great truth just announced, you shall be the first to proclaim it, in all its fulness, to the Jews, (as he did on Pentecost,) and to the Gentiles, (as he did at Cornelius' house;) and so the first to make known the gospel and lay the foundations of my church on earth. And when this is done, in common with your fellow-disciples, you shall have the same official power of binding and loosing under the new dispensation which those who sit in Moses' seat have had under the old. It shall be yours, under my guidance and that of the Comforter, to teach what is lawful and what unlawful in my church. And whatsoever you so "bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever you" (so) "loose on earth



shall be loosed in heaven." Your teaching shall be authoritative and binding.

The second passage gives the same authority to all the apostles, in respect to the subject of discipline in the church. And the last passage is as if the Savior had said—Now my work is done. I have tasted death for all. Redemption is complete, and the way open for the visible and official introduction of my church to the world. The "corner stone" is laid. It only remains more fully to instruct my followers and the world in respect to the nature and design of my kingdom, and the conditions of salvation, and more specifically to prescribe the order, institutions, discipline, and worship of my church. This work I now commit to you. "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." This is your commission. And as the evidence of your authority, and the pledge of your being under the infallible guidance of God in what you teach and prescribe, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." When he is come, (John xvi. 14,) "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." He will also (John xiv. 26) "teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." He will even (John xvi. 13) "show you things to come." Under his infallible guidance, then, go forward to the work I have assigned you. Order all the affairs of the church. Prescribe her order, institutions, worship. Declare to all on what terms, to what characters and temper of mind, God will extend the forgiveness of sin. Establish thus, in all the churches, the conditions on which men may be pardoned. In extraordinary cases, pronounce the judg-

ment of God on presumptuous and gross offenders. And "whose soever sins ye" so "remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye" so "retain, they are retained." What you do shall be in my name and by my authority.

And that this was the kind of power or authority conferred by Christ, in these passages, on the apostles, is proved by the fact that it is the very power or authority which they actually exercised. (1.) They gave full and explicit instruction in respect to the nature and design of the gospel kingdom, the truths of Christianity, and the terms of salvation; and claimed to do it by authority. Hence the fearful malediction of Paul, (Gal. i. 8, 12,) "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." And the reason assigned for it was, "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it of man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ;" i. e. I taught it by authority. (2.) With equal authority they pronounced the judgments of God, in extraordinary cases, on bold and presumptuous transgressors. Ananias and Sapphira were smitten dead. Hymeneus and Alexander, for their heresy, (2 Tim. ii. 18,) were "delivered" (1 Tim. i. 20) "unto Satan, that they might learn not to blaspheme." See also the rebuke of Simon Magus, (Acts viii. 18—24,) and the judgment of the incestuous person. (1 Cor. v. 3—5.) Finally, (3.) they ordered all the affairs of the church in the same manner. In respect to its *officers*, they directed the choice (Acts vi. 3) of deacons, and *appointed* them to their office. Wherever they went, (Acts xiv. 23,) they "ordained them elders in every

church." See also Titus i. 5, and ii. 15. They directed also the *discipline* of the church, as in the case of the incestuous person, (1 Cor. v. 13,) "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person." They gave order in respect to her *charities*, (1 Cor. xvi. 1,) "Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given *order* to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye." They corrected abuses, and prescribed the proper mode (1 Cor. xi. 20—30) of observing the Lord's supper, and (1 Cor. xi. 1—20, and xiv. 23—40) of conducting the meetings of the church; and said Paul, in reference to these regulations, (v. 37,) "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the *commandments of the Lord*." They prescribed in like manner the rites and ceremonies, or observances, of the church. In council assembled, they (Acts xv. 24, 29) assured the Gentile converts that they need not be circumcised, and keep the ritual law, but only that they abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, &c. In a word, they regulated, throughout, the faith, the institutions, the order, the worship of the church. And their uniform language, in all of their instructions and regulations, was that of command and authority. "So *ordain* I," says Paul, (1 Cor. vii. 17,) "in all the churches." And, (2 Thess. ii. 15, and iii. 6,) "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle," and "we *command* you, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which ye received of us." And says Peter, (2 Pet. iii. 1, 2),

"I write unto you that ye may be mindful of the *commandment* of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior." It is settled, then, beyond dispute, that the power to bind and to loose, conferred on the apostles by Christ, was the power to teach and to order *authoritatively* in all the affairs of the church. Here we have "*the law*."

The question now is, What is "the TESTIMONY"? Did the apostles, in the exercise of this power, authorize a change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week? If they did, the change is as authoritative and binding as if made by Christ himself. Whether they did or not is a question of fact, which must be determined by an appeal to "the testimony." The testimony is of course of two kinds—that of the Scripture record, and that of authentic ecclesiastical history. Our first inquiry is, What is the testimony, according to the Scripture record?

1. The apostles and early disciples were in the habit of meeting together, *at STATED TIMES, for public religious worship*. This none will deny — "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is." See also 1 Cor. xiv. 23, where Paul speaks of "the *whole church* as coming together into *one place*." It is equally obvious, that the exercises of these meetings were prayer and the various kinds of religious instruction, (see 1 Cor. xi. 1—16, and xiv. 23—40;) exhortation, (see Rom. xii. 8; 1 Thess. v. 11; Titus ii. 15;) singing, (see Col. iii. 16; Ephes. v. 19;) the observance of the Lord's supper, (1 Cor. xi. 20—34,) and such other things as were appropriately a part of public religious worship. Some of these meetings were occupied chiefly with prayer, praise,

exhortation, and instruction. At others the special object of the meeting was the observance of the Lord's supper — "the breaking of bread," as it was sometimes termed. And when the object was the observance of the supper, the meetings were as truly the public religious meetings of the church as were any others. The breaking of bread on the occasion was not the usual expression of Christian hospitality and kindness. Nor was it done at their private houses, but in the usual place of public worship — "What, (1 Cor. xi. 22, 34,) have ye not" (private) "houses to eat and to drink" (your ordinary meals) "in? If any man hunger, let him eat at home," (and not turn the Lord's supper into a common meal or a season of riot,) "that ye come not together" (in your place of public worship, to eat the Lord's supper) "unto condemnation." The observance of the ordinance was moreover accompanied with thanksgiving, prayer, religious instruction, and singing. Thus, at its first institution, when Christ sat down to the passover with his disciples, (Luke xxii. 16—18,) he declared that he would not eat of that again until it was fulfilled in the kingdom of God. He then took the passover cup, and "gave thanks," &c., adding that he would not drink of that again until the kingdom of God had come. He then gave them instruction on various topics — especially his death, and the full introduction of his kingdom. He informed them, (John xiii. 31, 32,) that the hour was at hand when the "Son of man" should be "glorified," and, in anticipation of that hour, he said, (Luke xxii. 29, 30,) "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may



eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." And then, instituting his table, as that which was to supersede the passover, he (Mark xiv. 22, 23) "took bread and blessed it," and afterwards "took the cup and gave thanks." Then followed other instructions, (John xiv. 1—30,) after which (Matt. xxvi. 30) "they sung a hymn," and then "went out into the mount of Olives." \* In like manner, the first disciples (Acts ii. 42) continued steadfastly in communion together, "and in breaking of bread, and in *prayers*." And subsequently, (Acts xx. 7,) "when they came together to break bread, Paul *preached* unto them." From all which it is obvious that the meetings for the observance of the supper were as truly meetings of the church for public worship as were any other. And that *these* meetings were held regularly every first day of the week, is proved by the whole current of ecclesiastical history.† The observance of Lord's supper was as regular as the return of Lord's day, and was so far a regular observance of the day itself, as a day for public religious worship.

But these, as well as the other religious meetings of the church, it is said, were also held on other days of the week, as occasion might offer or convenience allow. Be it so; and what then? The same is true now. But such occasional or stated meetings *now* are no evidence that the first day of the week is not *also* ob-

\* For this order of events, see Townsend's Arrangement, part 6, sects. 30—36. Consult, also, any other Harmony of the Gospels.

† See the testimony of Pliny, Justin Martyr, and Eusebius, pp. 140, 141, 159, 161.

served, in distinction from other days, as the Sabbath. The stated Tuesday and Friday evening meetings, and the various other occasional meetings, of the churches in this city, during the week, do not prove that there is no day specially observed as Sabbath *here*. No more does the record of such meetings of the primitive churches prove the non-observance of the same Sabbath by them, in Eastern cities and in apostolic times. Admit, then, that the primitive churches had their stated and their occasional meetings during the week, just as the churches now do; it may yet appear that they also had the first day of the week set apart, as Sabbath, for their more general and regular meetings; and that this, in distinction from other days, and by divine authority, was their special and distinctive religious day—as truly special as was the Sabbath of old, and as really distinctive, in its observance, of the followers of Christ, as was that of the worshippers of Jehovah.

2. That it was so, is evident from *the title then given to it*, viz. "THE LORD'S DAY." John (Rev. i. 10) says, "I was in the Spirit on *the Lord's day*." That this was the first day of the week, or the day of Christ's resurrection, is proved by authentic history. *Ignatius*, in his Epistle to the Magnesians, about A. D. 101, calls the first day of the week, the *Lord's day*, the day consecrated to the resurrection, the queen and prince of all days; and says, "Let every friend of Christ celebrate the *Lord's day*." *Clement* of Alexandria, about A. D. 192, says, (Strom. VII. p. 744,) "A Christian, according to the command of the gospel, observes the *Lord's day*, thereby glorifying

the resurrection of the Lord." And again, (Strom. V. p. 600,) "The Lord's day is the eighth day." *Theodoret*, (Hæret. Fab. II. 1,) speaking of the Ebionites, a party of Judaizing Christians, says, "They keep the *Sabbath*" (seventh day) "according to the Jewish law, and sanctify the *Lord's day*" (first day) "in like manner as we do." *Barnabas*, who, if not a companion of the apostles, lived in the apostolic age, in his Catholic Epistle, says, "We" (Christians) "keep the eighth day" (i. e. the first day of the week) "as a joyful holy day, on which also Jesus rose from the dead." *Cyprian*, A. D. 253, in a letter to Fidus, says, that the *Lord's day* is the next day after the *Sabbath*. *Chrysostom* (Com. on Ps. cxix.) says, "It was called the *Lord's day*, because the Lord arose from the dead on this day." Other passages of a similar character will be quoted, in another connection, hereafter. These are sufficient to show, now, that when John said he was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, he spoke of the first day of the week, and that this day was *at that time* known, observed, and distinguished, in the church, from other days, by the name of "*the Lord's day*."

But why this designation? and what is its import? The *occasion* of it was, obviously, the resurrection of the Lord upon that day. And so far, its *import* was a memorial of that event. But if that were all, as the day of his ascension was afterwards known in the church as "Ascension day," why should not that of his resurrection be also known as "Resurrection day"? Why should one of them be called "Lord's day" rather than the other? Or, if the whole import of the title was to designate a day commemorative

merely of the event, why should either of them be so called? Surely "Ascension day" and "Resurrection day" were a more appropriate designation. So called, the title alone would indicate the event commemorated by the respective day. But call either of them "Lord's day," and the *title*, merely, gives you no clew to the event. In this case, the title points you only to the person, not to the event. And whether the event commemorated be his birth, temptation, crucifixion, resurrection, or ascension, or neither, you have to learn from other sources, not from the title. There must have been some further import, then, in this designation of the day. What was it?

To call this, rather than the other days of the week, "Lord's day," was saying, of course, that it was, in some *peculiar* sense, so *distinguished* from them, as to make it *his* day, by way of eminence, and in distinction from all other days. But why this distinction in *name*, indicative of a corresponding distinction in *fact*? What was the ground of it? Are not *all* days the Lord's? Do we not receive them all from him? Are we not bound to serve and honor him in them all? and, in this sense, to keep all days holy? Why, then, this distinction? Whence its origin? What its nature? The day was, in some sense above all other days, *peculiarly* the Lord's. How could it be so any more than Ascension day, or any other day of the week, except as *it*, in distinction from them, *was set apart, by the Lord, or by his authority, to be observed in honor of him, in some peculiar and distinctive way*? And, as they had some religious meetings on other days, in what distinctive way could they observe this, except they observed it *as their special and*

*distinctive religious day — a day devoted, like the Sabbath of old, to the business of religious instruction, improvement, and worship, and, in its observance, designed to be a distinctive badge of discipleship?* Obviously, it was as a day thus specially and distinctively set apart to the worship and service of the Lord, that it was called "Lord's day." Such, at least, is the import of its title, as demanded by the nature of the case.

That such is the true import, is further obvious from *Scripture usage* in similar cases. "The sanctuary of the Lord," (1 Chron. xxii. 19,) and "the Lord's house," (Ps. cxvi. 19,) denote plainly a sanctuary, and a house specially set apart, in distinction from ordinary houses, to his service and honor. "Apostles of the Lord," or Lord's apostles, (2 Pet. iii. 2,) means, of course, men set apart, by the Lord, to his service and honor, as apostles. "Apostles of Christ," or Christ's apostles, (1 Thess. ii. 6,) means the same. "The Sabbath of the Lord," or the Lord's Sabbath, applied (Lev. xxiii. 3) to the original seventh day Sabbath, plainly signifies a day appointed or set apart, by the Lord, for his service and honor. "Feasts of the Lord," and "Sabbaths of the Lord," (Lev. xxiii. 4, 38,) imply the same. So in the New Testament — "The cup of the Lord," or the Lord's cup, and "the Lord's table," (1 Cor. x. 21,) imply that these, in distinction from ordinary cups and tables, and from those dedicated to devils, are set apart or consecrated to the service and honor of the Lord.

But a still more decisive instance of this usage is furnished in the phrase "*the Lord's supper*." (1 Cor. xi. 20.) Here we find a particular supper singled out and distinguished from all other suppers, as the Lord's.



Why? Not that one supper, any more than one cup or table, is intrinsically more holy than another; not that one belongs to the Lord any more than another; not that we are not bound to serve and glorify God in one, as truly as another; for "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," is the command; nor was it that in these senses all suppers are not equally the Lord's; for they are, and the apostle understood it so. Why, then, the application of the name to one, rather than another, and the consequent distinction of the one as, in some sense, *peculiarly* his? The only answer is, what from other sources we know to be true, that this, in distinction from all others, was the supper set apart, or instituted, by the Lord, to be observed in remembrance and honor of him, and therefore as a badge or sign of discipleship itself. Its appointment as a special religious ordinance was by him. Its observance as such was, and was to be, in remembrance and honor of him, and was thus, of necessity, a distinctive badge or sign of those that were his. Of course it was, above all others, peculiarly the Lord's, and, being so, received its designation accordingly. How, then, can we resist the conclusion, that the same was true of "the Lord's day"? We cannot. As the phrase "The Lord's supper" signified a supper set apart, in distinction from all others, by the Lord, to be observed as a special and distinctive religious ordinance, in remembrance and honor of him, so "the Lord's day" signified a day set apart in the same way, as the special and distinctive religious day of his people. Each, in its observance, was alike honorary of him as their Lord, and distinctive of them as his

people. Such, beyond all question, is the legitimate and true import of the phrase. In the very title of the day, then, we have the proof that the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, was made by Christ himself, or by his authority.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE ARGUMENT CONTINUED.

3. FURTHER evidence of this change is found in the fact that the observance of the first day of the week, as their regular and distinctive religious day, *was the general custom of the primitive churches, and that in this custom they had apostolic sanction.* The evidence on this point is twofold—that of the Bible and that of ecclesiastical history. As the latter casts light on the former, it may be appropriately introduced first.

The passages already quoted show the prevalence of the custom, and that it was peculiar to the Christians. Besides these, *Irenæus*, bishop of Lyons, A. D. 167, says, "On the Lord's day every one of us Christians keeps Sabbath, meditating on the law, and rejoicing in the works of God." *Dionysius*, bishop of Corinth, A. D. 170, (see Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. 4, c. 23,) writing to the Romans, informs them that the Epistle of Clement, their late bishop, was read in the church at Corinth, while they were keeping the Lord's holy day. *Tertullian*, A. D. 192, (De Idolat. ch. 14,) says, "We have nothing to do with the Sabbath," (the Jewish seventh day;) "the *Lord's day* is the *Christian's* solemnity." *Pliny*, the Roman governor of Bithynia, A. D. 107, in his letter to the emperor Trajan, respecting the Christian martyrs, says that some who

had been induced, by the sufferings to which they were subjected, to renounce their faith in Christ, gave this account of their former religion — “That they were accustomed, on a *stated day*, to meet before daylight, and to repeat among themselves a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves by an oath not to commit any wickedness, but, on the contrary, to abstain from thefts, robberies, and adulteries; also not to violate their promise, or deny a pledge; after which it was their custom to separate and meet again at a promiscuous and harmless meal.” That the “stated day” spoken of was the first day of the week, is proved by the question which the Roman persecutors were wont to put to their victims, and by the answer which was, in substance, usually given to it. The question was, “*Dominicum servasti?*” i. e. “Hast thou kept the Lord’s day?” The answer was, “*Christianus sum; intermittere non possum;*” i. e. “I am a Christian; I cannot omit it.” \* *Justin Martyr*, in his *Apology*, (*Apol. I. chap. 67.*) addressed to the emperor Antoninus, A. D. 147, gives a still more minute account of the Christian day of worship. He says, “On the day called” (by you Romans) “Sunday, there is a meeting in one place of all the Christians who live either in the towns or in the country, and the *Memoirs of the Apostles*,” (supposed to be the four Gospels,) “or the writings of the prophets, are read to them as long as is suitable. When the reader stops, the president pronounces an admonition, and exhorts to the imitation of these noble examples; after which we all arise and begin to pray.” He then gives an

\* Acts of Martyrs, in Bishop Andrews on the Ten Commandments, p. 264.

account of the observance of the Lord's supper, and says also that at these meetings money was always collected for the benefit of the poor.

These testimonies prepare us the better to appreciate the force of the Scripture testimony. That testimony is as follows: (1.) From Acts xx. 3—7 we learn, that Paul and his companions, on leaving Greece to go up to Jerusalem, came to Troas, and "abode there *seven days*. And upon the *first day of the week*, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow."

The phrase translated here, "And upon the first day of the week," is, in the original, 'Εν δὲ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων; i. e. literally, "And upon the one of the Sabbaths." Some have argued from this, that the time here spoken of was not the first day of the week, but only one of the Jewish Sabbaths. To this it is sufficient to say, that in other passages, where the first day of the week is unquestionably designated, the language of the original is the same. Thus in Luke xxiv. 1 — "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre," &c. This, being the day of Christ's resurrection, was clearly the first day of the week. Yet the language of the original is, Τῇ δὲ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων; literally, "Upon the one of the Sabbaths." In John xx. 1, it is the same. So also in Matt. xxviii. 1, and Mark xvi. 2. This settles the point that the time in the present case was the first day of the week.

It is equally obvious, that the meeting spoken of in this passage, as occurring at Troas, on this day, was according to *established custom*, and not a special or



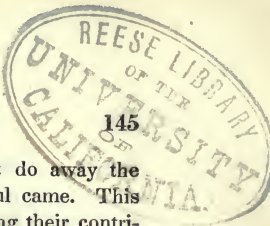
occasional meeting called because of Paul's departure on the morrow. A strictly-literal rendering of the passage makes this quite clear; thus — "Upon the first day of the week, the disciples having assembled to break bread, Paul preached to them, being about to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." Now, had this meeting been a special or occasional one, called because of Paul's departure on the morrow, that which, as a *leading object*, called them together, must have been to hear Paul preach, and the breaking of bread must have come in, if at all, only as incidental to that, and not that as incidental to their assembling to break bread. And is it to be supposed that Paul and his companions remained there during the previous "seven days," with no meetings of the disciples, and no opportunities to address them until just as they were going away? Rather, is it not obvious that they had such meetings and such opportunities during the week? Could it have been otherwise? And must they not therefore have delayed their departure, until after the first day of the week, not for the sake of an opportunity to preach to the disciples, but just as they would now do it in Boston in similar circumstances, *that they might have the privilege of spending the Sabbath and commemorating the Lord's supper with them, at their regular season of public worship on that day?* \*

Moreover, had the meeting in question been an occasional one, and the leading object of it therefore to

\* Acts xxi. 4 records a similar tarry of Paul and his companions at Tyre, for "seven days," — doubtless for the same reason.

hear Paul preach, its record must have run thus — “Upon the first day of the week, the disciples having assembled to hear Paul preach, because he was about to depart on the morrow, *they* took that opportunity to break bread, or celebrate the Lord’s supper.” This would have made the latter truly incidental to the former, and have given a true account of the matter, on this supposition. Such, however, is not the record. It is just the reverse. It is, that “Upon the first day of the week, the disciples having assembled to break bread, or celebrate the Lord’s supper, *Paul* took that opportunity to *preach*.” This makes the preaching incidental to their assembling for the observance of the supper, and it presents their assembling as the usual custom of the church. It is as if the writer had said, “Upon the first day of the week, the disciples having assembled, *according to custom*, to celebrate the Lord’s supper, Paul took that opportunity to preach to them, as he was about to leave on the morrow; and, on the same account also, he continued his speech until midnight, when the accident occurred, which is afterwards narrated.” How plain, then, that this was the regular weekly meeting of the church for public religious worship, and that it was held as a matter of established custom on each returning first or Lord’s day!

(2.) Paul says, (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2,) “Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.” The laying up in store spoken of, was not, of course, laying up in store *at*



*home*; for that would in no respect do away the necessity of "gatherings" when Paul came. This could be prevented only by their putting their contributions into some public common store, where they would be ready for the apostle on his arrival — in other words, into the *public common treasury of the church*. The contribution was for the poor of the church. It would be made *most fittingly, only* when the members of the church were generally assembled to commemorate, by the observance of the supper, the love of that common Lord, who, though rich, for their sakes became poor. It could be made *most conveniently, only* at those times and on those occasions when they were most generally together; i. e. at their seasons of public worship. It could be made *regularly, only* at the *regular and established* seasons of such worship. It *was* to be made, as the passage shows, on the first day of every week. How, then, can we avoid the conclusion, that this, above all other days, was the regular and established day for public religious worship? Why the injunction — an injunction extending to all the churches — to make the collection on this rather than some other day of the week, except that this, in distinction from all others, was the regular religious day of the churches, and therefore the day when they would be most generally and regularly assembled, and be able most conveniently to make it?

Place, now, these testimonies together; and do they not prove, beyond dispute, (1.) that the early Christians were in the habit of meeting for religious instruction and worship, the celebration of the Lord's supper, and the collection of charity on the first day of the week?

and, (2.) that this was not an occasional occurrence, but the regular, universal, and distinctive custom of the churches? Examine the witnesses. So far as the Scripture testimony is concerned, it is plain that the custom obtained, as a regular and established one, in Jerusalem, in Troas, among all the churches of Galatia, and in Corinth. As to the other testimony, the writers lived in various and remote countries — Barnabas and Justin, in Palestine; Pliny, (while proconsul,) in Bithynia; Tertullian and Cyprian, in Libya; Dionysius, in Greece; those to whom he wrote, in Italy; Irenæus, in Gaul; Ignatius, in Syria, &c. They lived, too, at different periods during the second and third centuries. They all agree in respect to the prevalence of the custom in their country and time. This settles the fact of its universality. They agree also that it was peculiar to and distinctive of Christians — that it was a new custom, begun and identified with Christianity, and unknown before. Indeed, to such an extent was it the distinctive peculiarity or badge of discipleship, that their persecutors, instead of asking whether they were Christians, determined that point by asking whether they kept the Lord's day! And the answer they received was, "We are Christians, and therefore we cannot but keep it" — as if they had said, "The observance of the day, in honor of our Lord, and our religion are identical; the one is but the badge or public profession of the other, and we can therefore no more omit the one than we can give up the other." The existence, universality, and distinctiveness of the custom in question, during the first three centuries, is, then, beyond dispute. The religious observance of the first day of the week, as

Lord's day, in honor of Jesus Christ, was as universal as the church itself. It was also as distinctive a badge of Christians, as the followers and worshippers of Jehovah-Savior, as the observance of the former Sabbath had been of the Jews, as the servants and worshippers of Jehovah-Creator.

But whence came this new and distinctive custom? By what authority gained it such general and universal prevalence? Not of accident, plainly; nor yet of assumption. For had it been from either of these, there must have been diversity in the custom, not widespread and universal uniformity. The accident or the assumption, whichever it might be, would not have been the same, the world over. The custom began, as we have seen, with Christianity, and spread wherever that did. Whence could it have originated, and by what authority could it have so spread, except from the origin and by the authority which gave being and prevalence to Christianity herself?

Besides, it was always the custom of the apostles, particularly of Paul, to expose and correct whatever was wrong in the churches. If he found the Galatians or the Hebrews falling off to Judaism, he at once wrote them an epistle to correct their error. If he found the Corinthians glorying in men, — in Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, — or tolerating an incestuous person in the church, or perverting the Lord's supper, or conducting disorderly in their religious meetings, he at once corrected their errors and rebuked their sins. Now, had the regular religious observance of the first day of the week been a relic of Judaism, or a priestly assumption, or even an accidental custom inconsistent at all with the genius and spirit of Chris-



tianity, is it to be believed that he would not as readily have corrected this error, or denounced this sin? But did he do it? So far from it, we find him at Troas actually participating in its observance himself — nay, to all appearance, delaying his journey for several days, that he may have the privilege of doing it! Nor have we a solitary hint from him, here or elsewhere, that there was any thing wrong, Judaistic, or anti-Christian in it. And what is this but *apostolic sanction*? Moreover, when he writes to the Corinthians, in the very Epistle in which he corrects so many other errors and reproves so many other faults, so far from blaming them for their regular observance of the first day of the week as a day of public religious worship, he directs them, as he had before directed all the churches of Galatia, to do that, in time to come, which they could not do except as they kept up the custom. The whole direction about the regular weekly collection went on the assumption that the custom of the regular weekly meeting was to be permanent. In giving the direction, then, to make a regular weekly collection on the first day of the week, Paul virtually directed them to keep up their regular weekly meeting for public worship, at which the collection was to be made. The ordering of the one was virtually an *ordering* to *persist* in the other. And what is this but *apostolic appointment*? It is clear, then, that the observance of the first day of the week, as their regular and distinctive religious day, was the general and established custom of the primitive churches, and that in this custom they had apostolic sanction and authority, and in these, the sanction and authority of Jesus Christ.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE PROOF-TEXTS OF OPPONENTS.

THE favorite proof-texts of the opponents of the Sabbath only confirm the view we have taken. These texts are, Col. ii. 16, 17, "Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ;" and Rom. xiv. 5, "One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

These passages are quoted as if they had reference primarily and especially to the question of the Sabbath as *now* agitated. It is *assumed* that the meaning of the apostle is this — "Let no man judge or censure you in regard to the observance of the old Jewish or seventh day Sabbath, or any of the other Jewish feasts or ceremonials; for they are all only a shadow which is fulfilled in Christ, and are therefore now no longer obligatory. And, in respect to the observance of the first, or indeed of any particular day, as Sabbath, one man esteemeth one day, as, for instance, the first, above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind, and observe one day, or another, or

none, as he chooses." Such, I say, is *assumed* to be their meaning ; for no argument is ever attempted to *prove* it. But such is not their meaning. So far from it, they either have *no* reference to the seventh or the first day Sabbath, but only to the other Jewish festivals or Sabbaths, or they declare simply, that the seventh day Sabbath is no longer obligatory, and do it in circumstances which make it a virtual declaration that the Lord's day, or first day Sabbath, is obligatory. This will be apparent as we proceed.

In the apostolic age, the first and the seventh day of the week had each its *appropriate and distinctive name, which name was never applied to the other*. The former was called ἡμέρα κυριακή, i. e. "*Lord's day*," and never Sabbath. The latter was called σάββατον, i. e. *Sabbath*, and never Lord's day. This is obvious from the passages, from various ecclesiastical writers, quoted on pp. 134, 135. Moreover, this distinction of name was kept up for a long period. Professor Stuart, of Andover, (Gurney on the Sabbath, p. 114,) says, "It was not until the party in the Christian church had become extinct, or nearly so, who pleaded for the observance of the seventh day, or Jewish Sabbath, as well as of the Lord's day, that the name *Sabbath* began to be given to the first day of the week." As late as the fourth century, the names were as distinct from each other as the days.

That there was a party in the primitive church, who urged the observance of both days, is a simple historic fact. The Ebionites were of this class. "They," says Theodoret, "keep the *Sabbath*" (seventh day) "according to the Jewish law, and sanctify the *Lord's day*" (first day) "in like manner as we do." In-

deed, so prevalent was this party at one time, and so superstitious, withal, in their observance of the seventh day, that to counteract it, the Council of Laodicea, about A. D. 350, passed a decree, saying, "It is not proper for Christians to Judaize, and to cease from labor on the Sabbath," (seventh day;) "but they ought to work on this day, and to put especial honor" (*προτιμῶντες*) "upon the *Lord's day*," (first day) "by refraining from labor, as *Christians*. If any one be found Judaizing, let him be anathematized."

That such a party should arise, especially among the converts from Judaism, was most natural. Christianity itself was but the substance, of which Judaism was the shadow or type. It was indeed the same religion, only under a new dispensation — that of Messiah come, instead of that of Messiah typified and expected. Moreover, the attachment of the Jew to the religion of his fathers was intense and proverbial. How natural, then, that he should cling to old rites and ceremonies, even after his reception of Messiah! How prone such converts were to fall back upon these observances, and even to place reliance on them as grounds of salvation, is obvious from the Epistles to the Galatians and the Hebrews. Even Peter, (Gal. ii. 11—14,) with all his visions on the subject, was too feeble to stem the current.

In these circumstances, the question of the observance of Jewish rites and ceremonies would be naturally and continually coming up; at one time, in regard to circumcision; at another, in respect to meats and drinks; at another, in respect to religious feasts and holy days; and among the rest, in respect to the seventh day Sabbath. But whenever the ques-

tion came up, whether in reference to one or all of these, the only answer that could be given was substantially this:—As symbols or types, these things are all fulfilled in Christ. Their observance is therefore no longer *obligatory*. As such they are at an end—the shadow having given place to the substance; Messiah typified, to Messiah come. At the same time, as, in the case of circumcision, for instance, or that of the religious observance of particular days, or abstinence from particular meats, there is nothing wicked in the things themselves, if one thinks he must do them, therefore, to satisfy any scruples of mind you may have, you can observe them if you wish—provided always, that you do it as *Christians*, and not as *Jews*, and therefore never place any reliance on their observance for your salvation, and never attempt to bind the conscience of others in respect to them. Observed with this condition, they are, in themselves, harmless, and may be observed or not, as you severally choose. But the moment you go to placing reliance on their observance for salvation, “Ye are fallen from grace,” (Gal. v. 4;) you have rejected *Christ* come in your reliance on *Christ typified*; and, (Gal. iv. 21, and v. 2, 4,) “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised,” and go to relying on that for salvation, “Christ shall profit you nothing. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law. Ye are fallen from grace.” No more may you bind the conscience of your brother in the case. “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant,” and presumest to condemn him in



matters which his master does not make obligatory, but in respect to which each is allowed to "be fully persuaded in his own mind"? In these things no man may "judge" another. See, then, that ye neither "judge" others, nor allow them to "judge" you in respect to them.

This, indeed, was just the question that came up, and just the answer that Paul gave to it in the passages now in question, and so often *mis*-quoted as proof-texts against the divine authority of the LORD'S DAY, or Christian Sabbath. It would seem, (Col. ii. 14—23,) that certain persons wished to make the Colossians "subject to" (Jewish) "ordinances" about "meat, and drink, and a holy day," &c., and that they even went so far as to insist that their observance was *obligatory*, and to *condemn* and *censure* those who did not observe them. To this the apostle replied, These were but "a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." He therefore has "blotted out the hand-writing of *ordinances* that *was* against us, nailing it to his cross," so that it is now no longer *obligatory*. "Let no man therefore judge you" in respect to any of its requirements — "in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days."

The same leaven was at work among the Romans. The apostle met it in the same way — "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his *own* master he standeth or falleth. Yea," in the present case, and in respect to the matters now in question, "*he*," the Christian, shall not fall at all; "he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand." For instance, "One man esteemeth one day above an-

other," and is therefore disposed to keep particular days holy, or to observe them as religious festivals: "another esteemeth every day," and does not feel under any obligation to keep particular days. Now, the true Christian doctrine, in respect to these matters, is, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." If he thinks he ought to observe particular days, let him; if he thinks their observance is not obligatory, and wishes to act accordingly, let him. There is no harm in either case, provided he act in each as a Christian. For the Christian, "that regardeth the day," if he does it as a Christian, and not as a Jew, "regardeth it unto" the honor of "the Lord" Jesus Christ; and, on the other hand, the Christian, "that regardeth not the day," does it with a view to the same end, the honor of the Lord Jesus — "to the Lord he doth not regard it." Just so with regard to eating or not eating particular meats. Let every Christian do as he pleases in the case. At the same time, (v. 13,) let no one, in these indifferent matters, "put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way." True, (v. 14,) "there is nothing unclean of itself," and so far you may eat what meats you please; nevertheless, (v. 15,) "if thy brother," the Jewish convert, "be grieved with" your eating all kinds of "meat," and you thereby put a stumbling-block, or an occasion of offence, in his way, "thou walkest not charitably" towards him, and your eating, however innocent in itself, is therefore (v. 20) "evil." For, according to the charity of the gospel, (v. 21,) "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

Such, obviously, are the drift and import of the passages. I remark, then, (1.) it is plain that the apostle is here contending with those who were clamorous for the continued and *obligatory* observance of the Mosaic ritual. It was purely a question about Jewish "ordinances." In Colossians, indeed, it is so stated. Hence, too, the reference, in the text and context, to meats, and drinks, and new moons, and holy days, as well as Sabbaths. The apostle's decision was, that such observance was not obligatory, though on certain conditions to be allowed to the Jewish convert, and tolerated by the Gentile. It is therefore altogether probable, that the "Sabbaths" spoken of in the first passage (Colossians) were not the seventh day Sabbath, but only the other and ceremonial Sabbaths. At all events, the first day or Christian Sabbath was not referred to at all, for that was then known only as "the first day of the week," or "Lord's day," and was never called Sabbath until centuries afterward. Be those "Sabbaths," then, what they might, deciding that *they* were not obligatory, was not deciding that the *Lord's day* was not.

The same is true of the passage in Romans. The entire context shows that the question at issue, and the apostle's decision of it, were the same as in the other case. Moreover, what proof is there that the "*day*" spoken of was a *Sabbath* of any kind? The term "Sabbath" does not occur at all in the text or context. For aught that appears in *them*, the "*day*" in question may have been some holy or feast day, not a Sabbath. It is but *probability* to suppose that it was any *Sabbath* day whatever, ceremonial, seventh day, or first. It is *sheer assumption* to suppose that it was

the first or seventh day Sabbath, rather than the ceremonial Sabbaths. If the day or days were some Sabbath, the whole drift and import of the passage point to the ceremonial Sabbaths, not to the seventh day Sabbath, nor to the first, as the Sabbaths in question. All that can be fairly argued from the passage is, that Christians were at liberty to be fully persuaded in their own minds in respect to the observance of ceremonial feast days or Sabbaths, and to observe them or not, as they chose. There is not a particle of evidence, that the apostle had his eye on any other day whatever. To suppose that he had, and that that day was the seventh or the first day Sabbath, is not only a groundless assumption, but foreign entirely to the scope of the apostle's argument. And to suppose that the seventh day Sabbath, or the first, were included among the others as ceremonials, and so set aside, is to beg the whole question about their being ceremonials. Nay, were it even admitted that the seventh day Sabbath was so, and was therefore set aside with the rest, it by no means follows that the "Lord's day," or first day Sabbath, was. The ceremonial Sabbaths, including the seventh day, if you will, may all have ceased to be obligatory, and yet the obligation to observe the Lord's day remained in full force. In deciding, then, that they had ceased to be obligatory, the apostle by no means decided that the Lord's day had. As well may you say, that the decision that eating certain meats, and abstaining from others, is no longer obligatory, was a decision that the observance of the Lord's supper was not obligatory. The truth is, the question of the observance or non-observance of the Lord's supper, or the Lord's day,

was not the question at issue in either of these cases, and therefore not the question decided in either. The argument from these passages for the non-observance of the first day of the week as Sabbath is therefore groundless. Neither passage has any reference whatever to that question. The most that can be made of them, on the most liberal interpretation, is a decision that the seventh day Sabbath, in common with the ceremonial Sabbaths, was no longer obligatory.

But such a decision, in the circumstances, was a virtual decision that the Lord's day *was* obligatory. What were the circumstances? First, that the first day of the week, as we have seen, was universally and religiously observed in the primitive church, and that it was observed and known as "Lord's day." Second, that its observance was every where regarded as obligatory — how else could there have been such a general uniformity in regard to its actual observance? Such uniformity did not obtain touching circumcision or the observance of the seventh day Sabbath, which some of the early disciples advocated, but which were to others of doubtful authority and obligation. The universal observance of the Lord's day in the primitive church, like their observance of baptism and the Lord's supper, is proof of a universal conviction that such observance was obligatory. Indeed, among all the questions and controversies that arose in the first ages of the church about the continued observance of the seventh day Sabbath, — and they were many, — it is not known that the propriety of observing Lord's day was ever questioned. Professor Stuart (Gurney, p. 115) says, "There appears," on this point, "never



to have been any question among any class of the early Christians, so far as I have been able to discover. Even the Ebionites, who kept the Sabbath (seventh day) according to the Jewish law, kept also the Lord's day. All were agreed, then, in the obligation to keep the Lord's day. Now, to raise the question, in these circumstances, whether the seventh day Sabbath should be kept or not, was to ask, not whether the first day was to be kept, — for that was settled, — nor whether the seventh was to be observed in preference to or in place of the first, — for this too was settled, — but *must* the seventh be *also* observed. And to decide, as, on the supposition before us, the apostle did, that it *need not also* be observed, — i. e. was not *also* obligatory, — was to decide that the other, viz. the Lord's day, was obligatory. The conclusion, then, is certain, either that the passages in question refer only to the Jewish ceremonial Sabbaths, not including the seventh day Sabbath, and therefore have no bearing whatever on the question of the Sabbath as now agitated; or that, in declaring the seventh as well as the ceremonial Sabbaths no longer obligatory, they virtually declare that the first day Sabbath, or Lord's day, is obligatory. In either case, the argument from them to the non-observance of Lord's day is vain."

## CHAPTER XV.

### TESTIMONY OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

EARLY and authentic ecclesiastical history confirms the view now presented. It states, indeed, in terms, that the Sabbath was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week, by authority of Christ himself; and also that the mode of keeping the one was transferred, so far as the genius of Christianity and the nature of the case would allow, to the other. Thus *Clement* of Alexandria (A. D. 192) says, "A Christian, according to the command of the gospel, observes the *Lord's day*." So that its observance, instead of being an accident, or a relic of Judaism, or in any way anti-Christian, was "*according to the command of the gospel*." *Athanasius* also, (A. D. 326,) renouncing the authority of the seventh day Sabbath, says, (De Semente, Ed. Colon. Tom. I. p. 1060,) "The Lord himself hath changed the day of the Sabbath to Lord's day." The testimony of *Eusebius* is still more to the purpose. He was born about A. D. 270, and died about 340. Mosheim says, he was "a man of vast reading and erudition." Till about forty years of age, he lived in great intimacy with the martyr Pamphilus, a learned and devout man of Cesarea, and founder of an extensive library

there, to which Eusebius had free access. Eusebius, as all admit, was an impartial as well as learned historian. He searched more thoroughly into the customs and antiquities of the church, than any other man in the early ages, and at Cesarea and elsewhere had access to the best helps for acquiring correct information. He is, by way of eminence, the ancient historian of the church. His testimony on the subject before us is contained in his commentary on the Psalms, printed in Montfaucon's *Collectio Nova Patrum*, and is as follows:—\*

In commenting on Ps. xxii. 29, he says, "On each day of our Savior's resurrection," (i. e. each first day of the week,) "which is called *Lord's day*, we may see those who partake of the consecrated food and that body" (of Christ) "which has a saving efficacy, after the eating of it, bowing down to him." pp. 85, 86.

Again, on Ps. xlv. 5, he says, "I think that he" (the Psalmist) "describes the morning assemblies, in which we are *accustomed* to convene *throughout the world*." p. 195.

On Ps. lix. 16, he says, "By this is prophetically signified the service which is performed very early and every morning of the resurrection-day," (i. e. the first day of the week,) "*throughout the whole world*." p. 272.

Again, Ps. xcii., which is entitled "*A Psalm or Song for the Sabbath-day*," he refers to the *Lord's day*, and says, "It exhorts to those things which are to be done

\* This testimony is given by Professor Stuart, Andover, in Gurney on the Sabbath, App. B.

on resurrection-day." Then, observing that the precept for the Sabbath was originally addressed to the Jews, and that they had often violated it, he adds, "Wherefore, as they rejected it," (the sabbatical command,) "THE WORD," (Christ,) "*by the New Covenant, TRANSLATED and TRANSFERRED THE FEAST OF THE SABBATH TO THE MORNING LIGHT, and gave us the symbol of true rest, viz. THE SAVING LORD'S DAY, the first*" (day) "*of the light, in which the Savior of the world, after all his labors among men, obtained the victory over death, and passed the portals of heaven, having achieved a work superior to the six days' creation.*"

This establishes the fact that the transfer of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week was made *by Christ himself*, and that, so transferred, under the name of "Lord's day," it was observed *throughout the Christian world*. The commentary proceeds—"On this day, which is the first" (day) "of light and of the true Sun, we assemble, after an interval of six days, and *celebrate holy and spiritual Sabbaths, even all nations redeemed by him throughout the world, and do those things according to the spiritual law, which were decreed for the priests to do on the Sabbath*; for we make spiritual offerings and sacrifices, which are called sacrifices of praise and rejoicing; we make incense of a good odor to ascend, as it is said, 'Let my prayer come up before thee as incense.' Yea, we also present the show-bread, reviving" (by the observance of the Lord's supper) "the remembrance of our salvation, the blood of sprinkling, which is the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins

of the world, and which purifies our souls. . . . . Moreover, we are diligent to do zealously, on that day, the things enjoined in this psalm; by word and work making confession to the Lord, and singing in the name of the Most High. In the morning, also, with the first rising of our light, we proclaim the mercy of God toward us; also his truth by night, *exhibiting a sober and chaste demeanor; and all things whatsoever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath,*" (seventh day,) "THESE WE HAVE TRANSFERRED TO THE LORD'S DAY, *as more appropriately belonging to it, because it has a precedence, and is first in rank, and more honorable than the Jewish Sabbath.* For on that" (the first) "day, in making the world, God said, Let there be light, and there was light; and on the same" (first) "day, the Sun of righteousness arose upon our souls. Wherefore *it is delivered to us*" (handed down by tradition) "*that we should meet together on this day; and it is ordered that we should do those things announced in this psalm.*" Subsequently he adds, "This Scripture teaches" (that we are to spend the Lord's day) "*in leisure for religious exercises,*" (τῶν θεῶν ἀσχέσεων,) "*and in cessation and vacation from all bodily and mortal works*—which the Scriptures call '*Sabbath*' and '*rest.*'"

This touches, with equal explicitness, the *mode* of keeping the day, and shows that, so far as the genius of Christianity and the nature of the case would allow, the mode of its observance, as well as the institution itself, was transferred from the one day to the other. Lord's day was, and was "ordered" to be, a day for the cessation of ordinary labors, and for pri-



vate and public religious instruction and worship, just as truly as was the old seventh day Sabbath. It was, in a word, the original institution, in its spiritual and essential elements, transferred by Christ himself to another day, and observed throughout the Christian world. The institution was the same. The mode of its observance, saving what of its former mode had been typical, was also the same. The day only was changed — changed by him who was at once “Head of the Church,” “Lord of the Sabbath,” and “God over all, blessed forever.”

Such, then, is the argument for the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. The change is just what we should expect in the event of there being any ; it is just what the circumstances of the case demand ; Christ, as Lord of the Sabbath and Head of the Church, had the right to make the change ; his example shows that he did not intend its abrogation, as an institution, but its perpetuity, with a change in the day of its observance : the same right he had to regulate the institutions and order of his church he gave to the apostles ; they, in their turn, gave their sanction and authority to the observance of the first day of the week as Sabbath, as is proved by the whole tenor of Scripture and ecclesiastical history ; and ecclesiastical history testifies, in so many words, that Christ himself “transferred” the Sabbath to the first day of the week, and that, so transferred, under the name of “Lord’s day,” it was observed throughout the then Christian world. It cannot be doubted, then, that under the Christian dispensation, the first day of the week has been set

apart, by divine appointment, to be observed, in place of the seventh, as the Christian Sabbath. As such, it is an institution of Christianity. It is part and parcel of Christianity. Like the Lord's supper, or the institution of marriage, it will live while Christianity does. Obligatory now, it will be obligatory always, and, in its regular observance, will be every where, as with the early Christians, a badge of discipleship itself.

**A SKETCH**  
**OF THE**  
**PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION**  
**FOR THE**  
**DISCUSSION OF THE SABBATH:**  
**WITH**  
**ACCOMPANYING REMARKS.**

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**BY REV. A. A. PHELPS.**

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## A SKETCH, & c.

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### ORIGIN AND DESIGN OF THE CONVENTION.

ON the 24th of September, 1840, at the close of one of the sessions of the New England Non-resistance Society, certain "friends of universal reform," as they styled themselves, held a meeting in the Chardon Street Chapel, Boston, "for the purpose of considering the expediency of calling a Convention to examine the validity of the views which generally prevail in this country as to the divine appointment of the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, and to inquire into the origin, nature, and authority of the ministry, and the church, as now existing." Of this meeting, Edmund Quincy was chairman, and Maria W. Chapman secretary. It was agreed, that such a Convention should be held; and Edmund Quincy, Maria W. Chapman, A. Bronson Alcott, Thankful Southwick, and John A. Collins, were appointed a committee to issue the call, specifying the time, place, and purposes of the meeting. The call was issued; and in accordance with it, the Conven-



tion assembled, in the Chardon Street Chapel, on the 18th of November last.

It is understood that the Report, which was expected, of the proceedings of this Convention, is not to be published. On many accounts, it seems desirable that some permanent record of those proceedings should be made. The record made in this Sketch is not designed as a record of all the proceedings, much less as a connected report of the course of discussion on the main question, — that of the Sabbath, — but only of such portions of them as directly concern the argument, or as are important as an illustration of the real belief and spirit of those who were chiefly instrumental in originating and directing the Convention. The record is made from notes taken at the time; and while it does not give, except in cases so marked, the exact language of the speaker, it does give, with strict fidelity, the substance and true import of it.

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE CONVENTION.

When the writer entered the chapel, about an hour after the opening of the Convention, a chairman and secretary, *pro tem.*, had been chosen, a committee appointed to nominate officers for the Convention, and a motion was pending to appoint a committee on business. Upon this motion, a desultory and irregular discussion was going forward upon the propriety of having any officers for the Convention.

Dr. BROWN\* said, I am opposed to officers. I don't want them. I came here hoping to have a Holy Ghost meeting. Let us meet together as Christians, and wait upon the Lord, and speak as the Spirit gives utterance. And if any thing is revealed to one that sitteth by, let him get up and speak, and not be called to order by a chairman. I want a free meeting. I came here expecting to have one. But if you go to having your chairmen and your committees, it won't be a free meeting. I shall feel bound. I frequently go to meetings, and they call them free meetings, but they are not free. They are tied up to forms. They are tied up at one end to the minister, then to reading a chapter in the Bible, then to prayer by the priest, and so on, and at the last end they are tied to the doxology; and they call them free meetings, but they are not. The children of God are shut up in them. I didn't come here expecting this meeting to be opened by man, or shut by man. I expected it would be opened and shut by God, who openeth and no man shutteth, and who shutteth and no man openeth. I want the meeting to be free; then we shall all feel free, and there will be no high seats and no low seats, but there'll be a highway of the Lord here. I do hope that the spirit of God will prevail.

THOMAS DAVIS† said, I want to speak on this subject. We have met together on very important

\* Mr. Brown was formerly a Freewill Baptist, or Christian, (which I am not certain,) has practised some as a physician, and is now an Antinomian Perfectionist.

† One of the Cape Cod Come-outers.

questions, quite as important as that which called the primitive Christians together, when they met to consult about circumcision and some other things; and it seems to me very important that we meet together in a right way. Well, we read that they came together and waited on God by prayer and fasting. But we don't read any thing about their having any chairman, ("Amen!" by Dr. Brown,) nor about their having any president, ("Glory to God!" by Dr. Brown;) and their result, we have every reason to believe, was according to the mind of the Spirit. Let us wait on God in the same way, and we shan't need any chairman; and we shall know, by our own experience, what the true ministry is, and what the true church is, and what the true Sabbath of spiritual rest is.

Others expressed similar views.

W. L. GARRISON. I fully agree with these brethren about the importance of our meeting in the spirit of God; but I have frequently met them in anti-slavery meetings, and I never heard them complain before, that their liberty was infringed by the appointment of a chairman and secretary. I certainly marvel at this, and call on them to be consistent.

Dr. BROWN. I didn't come here to address man as an officer. I expected to meet with no officers here but such as are officers in the church of the living God—the new Jerusalem, which is from above, and which is the mother of us all. I don't feel called on to address any man as president, or chairman, or to give flattering titles to any one. I feel bound the moment I do it; and I perceive, by the grace of God given unto me, that all meetings are bound, as soon

as they appoint a man to preside over them. The brother, over there, that spoke about the meeting at Jerusalem, spoke my mind, as the Lord has revealed it to me. Those only are Christ's freemen who are out from under the yoke of committees, and chairmen, and ministers, and every such thing. The bondage in which men are to priests is a terrible one; but they may thank themselves for it. They put the priest up, and then he puts on the yoke, and they have to wear it. And it will be just so with this meeting. If you put a chairman or a committee up at one end of it, they'll put on the yoke, and you'll have to wear it. But I won't. I can't be ridden by a committee or a chairman any more than I can by a priest. I hope the tide will rise here, — the Holy Ghost tide I want, — and I hope it will rise so high as to wash out all the wood, and hay, and stubble, there is here. Glory to God! I want God to preside over this meeting. He that's joined to God is one spirit to God. And so it is with every thing else. He that's joined to any thing is one spirit with it. He that's joined to Van Buren is one spirit to Van Buren, and he that's joined to Harrison is one spirit to Harrison, and he that's joined to Congregationalists is one spirit to Congregationalists; and so it is with every thing. He that's joined to a chairman is one spirit to a chairman, and he that's joined to a committee is one spirit to a committee. I want to be joined to God, and I want to have this meeting joined to God, and then we shall be one spirit to him. The Lord keep the meeting pure. If it would do any good, I would cry for thunder and lightning, if nothing else would do it. O for a Holy Ghost

wind, to keep the meeting clear — such as they had on the day of Pentecost.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT.\* When this meeting was called, I expected that each one would have an opportunity to speak his own mind on the subjects named in the call. And as these subjects are related to almost every thing else, I supposed that any thing would be in place. I had hoped that our *method* of meeting would be a reformed method. We need reform in our methods of meetings, as well as in other things; and I would, therefore, propose to this meeting, that we simply meet and converse together, and have no chairman, &c. I wish to meet here as a man, and speak to the man in man — to universal man. Others wish to do the same. And I think, if the sense of the meeting were taken, a majority would be in favor of making it a conversational meeting.

S. B. BAILEY. I should prefer to have the meeting organized.

Dr. BROWN. I am opposed to organization. All organizations in nature revolve around some nucleus. If there is any one here, who wants to be the nucleus of this meeting, let him stand forth. God is my nucleus. I didn't come here to put a stopper in any man's mouth, nor to have any man put one into my mouth; and I protest against one's being put into any brother's mouth, or any sister's mouth. I can't feel free in this meeting if any man is put over it; and if one is put over it, I shall want to get out of it. Glory

\* This Mr. Alcott is not Dr. Alcott, the author of the *Young Man's Guide*, *The Young Husband*, &c., but the School Teacher Alcott, the author of *Orphie Sayings*, and other Transcendental writings.



to God! I feel as if I was out from under every thing that is coming down, and as if I could cry out to every body, Stand from under! stand from under! O my God, confound the yoke-makers.

Rev. S. Osgood, D. D., of Springfield. I didn't come here to hear this rant; and if we are to be here without order, and like the town meeting at Ephesus, the better part not knowing wherefore we are come together, I think we had better go home, and not stay here on expense, and to no purpose.

Dr. BROWN. I'm here on the king's expense.—Glory to God!

After considerable confusion, Dr. Brown put it to vote, whether the meeting would have a chairman or not. It was decided against him. The Committee on Officers then made report, which was accepted, and the chairman was about to proceed to the nomination of a Business Committee, when, with reference to what had been said before,

Mr. JOSEPH A. WHITMARSH said, Mr. Garrison says that the Sabbath question will set us to searching the Scriptures. I do not know about this. I do not see any thing about searching the Scriptures in the call.\*

\* Mr. Whitmarsh was one of Mr. Garrison's early disciples. He has since gone off to the no-money and other vagaries. On the 18th of May, 1839, he wrote the following in a letter to Mr. John E. Fuller, of Boston. "For one, I will only say, that I acknowledge no printed record, no Scriptures, nothing that ever was or is now printed, no man as my teacher or ruler. \* \* \* I am a *Man*. From this time, henceforth and forever, I renounce all professions. I have no fellowship or sympathy with any religious professedly 'benevolent' party or sectarian establishment or concern, with which I was ever connected, or with any

## 10 ORGANIZATION OF THE CONVENTION.

N. H. WHITING, of Marshfield.\* I didn't come here to search the Scriptures, as they are called. I came here for truth. And I mean to go over the world for it, and find it wherever I can. I don't mean to be confined to any particular book, written by any body, or at any time, past or present.

W. L. GARRISON. I came here to hear what the Scriptures say. I plant my feet on them. I know nothing of the Sabbath, the church, or the ministry, except as I learn it from them. I hold no argument on these subjects with those who deny the Bible. My remarks, so far as I make any, will be predicated on the Scriptures. There I stand.†

The Business Committee was then appointed. Several members declined serving on it, some because they were opposed to a committee, and some for other reasons; and at length, on the suggestion of Mr. May, the committee was dispensed with.

### THE BIBLE REJECTED.

Rev. J. V. HIMES, of Boston. It seems to me important, that we fix on some rule of authority in de-

which ever have existed or do now exist. I mean churches, societies, *isms*, *ists*, *ites*."

\* Mr. Whiting was not long since an agent of the old Massachusetts A. S. Society. He took a prominent part in the proceedings of the Convention.

† Yet, when Mr. Himes's resolution came up to make the Bible the only authoritative standard of appeal on the questions to come before the Convention, — a resolution which would require him to say in *what sense* he stood upon the Bible, — he at once opposed and voted against it!

ciding the questions that are to come before us. This will, of course, be the Bible, or the opinions, feelings, &c., of the individual minds here. I would therefore offer the following for the adoption of the Convention:—

*“Resolved, That the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are an authentic record of our faith, and the only rule of faith and duty.”*

A. BRONSON ALCOTT. I foresaw that there would be a previous question about the rule. I do not agree that the Scriptures, as they are called,—the Christian Scriptures,—are our only, or our highest rule. There are three Scriptures in the world—tradition, or unwritten Scripture; the Bible, or Christian Scriptures, and the Scriptures of other nations; and our own convictions. We should include in our rule not only our Scripture, but the Scriptures of all nations. Otherwise our standard is not broad enough. It is not broad enough, because it is not as broad as the soul of man. I do not think our Scriptures, then, are the higher and the only standard. I think the standard should be this—a man's own convictions.

THOMAS DAVIS, of Brewster. I feel a great degree of seriousness on my mind, I trust, from the spirit of the Great and Holy One, respecting the cause of Christ. The topics of the call of this meeting have been long on my mind. I think great consequences are to result from this meeting. I have reason to fear we don't pray enough. We have not prayer enough in this meeting. I don't insist on vocal prayer. That isn't what I mean, unless brethren feel to do it. But I do feel that we need to have more prayer.

W. L. GARRISON. There is a spirit of judgment in this meeting, which I feel bound to enter my protest against. I protest against the remarks just made by brother Davis. How does he know how much prayer there is here? In regard to the rule, if we undertake to adopt the resolution of brother Himes, we shall be driven into an endless discussion in respect to the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, and shall not be agreed in the end. I would, therefore, propose the following as a substitute:—

“*Resolved*, That, according to the Scriptures, the first day of the week is the true Christian Sabbath.”

Dr. OSGOOD. I am in favor of the resolution offered by Mr. Himes. We must have some *authoritative* book of appeal; and settling this settles the question whether we are to meet as a body of infidels or Christians.

Dr. BROWN. I am opposed to that resolution, and any thing like it. Are we to be bound down by revelations that others have had? Why, this looks like each one's bringing a little god in here under his cloak, and then calling on all the rest to bow down to it. I shan't do any such thing.

A. BRONSON ALCOTT. I did not understand by the call for this Convention, that we *were* to discuss these questions as *Christians*. I supposed we were to discuss them as *men*, and should, therefore, be at liberty to seek the truth in respect to them any where.

W. L. GARRISON. I am opposed to the resolution of brother Himes, and shall vote against it, because I foresee, if that passes, that it will defeat the object of the Convention.

Rev. SILAS HAWLEY, of Groton. I think we must agree on some standard, by which to settle the validity of the common opinions on these topics. Otherwise we can make no progress in the discussion.

Rev. JOHN PIERPONT, of Boston. I object to the idea that the Scriptures are the *only* rule of faith and practice. There are a great many subjects—scientific, for instance—on which the Bible does not pretend to be a rule at all. I would therefore offer, in the place of both the resolutions before the meeting, the following:—

*“ Proposition. — The first day of the week is ordained, by divine authority, as the Christian Sabbath.”*

Rev. J. V. HIMES. I am not disposed to be nice about terms. All I want is the *thing*. Some, I apprehend, under brother Pierpont’s proposition, will refer to “the divinity that stirs within them.” What I wish is, an appeal “to the law and to the testimony.” They are our only authoritative standard, and if they speak not according to them, it is not that they have got more light, but because they have got none — “there is no light in them.” I wish a resolution, therefore, that shall make the Bible our standard of appeal.

W. L. GARRISON. I second the proposition of Mr. Pierpont. I like it better than my own. Brother Himes’s resolution will not only shut out avowed infidels, but some who profess to be Christians.\*

Rev. NATHANIEL COLVER, of Boston. I am in favor of brother Himes’s resolution, for three reasons —

\* That is, such professing Christians as Brown, Whiting, and Alcott — Christians that scout the Bible as among the “musty records” of other days, and inferior in authority to our “own convictions.”



(1.) The questions before us have their origin in the Bible. (2.) The Bible, if a rule at all, is an entire rule. Paul told Timothy, that "all Scripture was given by inspiration," &c. (3.) If we are to discuss the authenticity and authority of the Bible, let us do so at once, and not whip the Bible over the back of the Sabbath and the other questions before us.

Mr. DYER, of Vermont.\* I object to the resolution of brother Himes; and I will give my reasons. (1.) To say that the Bible is the only rule, &c., is to say that one half the human family have no rule. Whence, then, is their condemnation? (2.) It is to deny that Jesus Christ is our rule. And, sir, Jesus Christ is my rule. Sir, you pin me down to the Scriptures, and you bind me down to forms and ceremonies. And I can't be bound down to them. The letter killeth. It is the spirit, sir, that giveth life. I do hope, therefore, that that resolution will not pass. It looks too much like yokes, and bars, and gags, and I don't like it. I like Mr. Pierpont's, and I hope we shall adopt that.

Rev. N. COLVER. If there are any here, who feel that the Bible is yokes and fetters, it is pretty clear that they have nothing to do with the question before us.

Dr. BROWN. When it is said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration," I take it, it don't mean that only which is between the lids (referring to the Bible) of that book.

Rev. Mr. PARKER, of Roxbury.† The Old and New Testaments are in many respects a contradiction.

\* One of the Antinomian Perfectionists of that state.

† A Unitarian clergyman, of the Transcendental school.

How, then, can they be made the only rule, as the resolution affirms?

N. H. WHITING. Whether the resolution (Mr. Himes's) passes or not, I shan't be trammelled by it. I came here for truth, and I won't be tied down to the Scriptures, or any thing else, for it. I mean to seek truth wherever I can find it. I don't care where it comes from. If it comes from a child, or from the devil, if it is truth, I'll receive it, and wherever I find it, I'll call it God's truth. Besides, it is a disputed question, what the real Scripture is. If I am correctly informed, a large portion of the Scriptures, as they are called, was not written when Paul said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration," &c. The Bible, as we have it now, was not made up till some time after; and it is not clear how much of it is real Scripture, and how much of it is not.

After some further discussion, Mr. Himes's resolution was voted down, and Mr. Pierpont's adopted,\* and the Convention adjourned to the afternoon.

#### COMMENCEMENT OF THE DISCUSSION.

At the opening of the session in the afternoon, Mr. Pierpont's resolution was in order. As this presented the question in the affirmative form, the advocates of the Sabbath were called upon to step forward in its

\* Those only voted who were actual members of the Convention. Messrs. Colver, Lee, Osgood, myself, and others, though participating, by permission, in the discussions of the Convention, did not enroll ourselves or act as members.

defence. They replied, that they themselves were satisfied with the current views on the subject ; that they had no doubt of their correctness ; that if others had, and had actually summoned a Convention for the purpose of raising the question in regard to it, it became them to open the discussion ; and that it would be in season for the friends of the Sabbath to defend it after it had been assailed ; that as their opponents were the *real* plaintiffs in the case, it became them to act as such, and not, by the shape of their resolution, shift the case so as to make the friends of the Sabbath the plaintiffs, and themselves the defendants. They, therefore, as the real plaintiffs, were called on to step forth with their reasons *against* the proposition, that the first day of the week is ordained, by divine authority, as the Christian Sabbath.

In the course of this discussion, Mr. GARRISON particularly challenged the ministry to step forward in defence of their cherished institution. He said, "I see here several clergymen, who do not hesitate to fulminate damnation from their pulpits on those who do not keep the first day of the week as Sabbath ; but now they are here with the common people, they are silent. Why don't they come forward and meet the question here ? Are they conscious of the weakness of their cause ? I am glad to see this indication of a want of faith in their opinions. — Mr. Garrison was reminded, that it might be as well to reserve his boasting until we were through with the discussion, and that, in the mean time, the friends of the Sabbath would defend it, when, in their judgment, it was necessary. The discussion proceeded. Several individuals spoke against the current views of the Sabbath. Dr. Os

good, at the opening of the evening session, spoke in their defence. The discussion continued through the two succeeding days. Just at its close, on the evening of the third day, Mr. GARRISON said, I wish to call the attention of the meeting to a remarkable fact. It is, that among all those who have addressed the Convention in defence of the Sabbath, there has not been one layman—they have all been clergymen! There is the fact. I do not offer it as argument; I only call attention to it. It strikes me as quite significant. The meeting will make what inference they please from it.

Mr. COLVER replied, According to brother Garrison's theory,\* we are all priests. Of course, we have had nothing but priests on that side. But the ministers—ay, there's the rub. It's *in* the man, and it will come out. The *Clergy*—the CLERGY—the CLERGY—there it is. Brother Garrison can't let it go, without a ding at the clergy. Well, let it out—let it out. But really, such a fling does not come with very good grace from one, who, at the opening of the Convention, so boldly dared us to the discussion. Then, to be sure, he dared us to it; and now, when we have met the challenge, he blames us for it, and very magnanimously flings it at us, as a significant fact. The fling, I think, will be duly understood.

\* Referring to a remark of Mr. G., in another connection, that "There is a royal priesthood, and it is all those who believe."

SENTIMENTS OFFERED IN THE PROGRESS OF  
THE DISCUSSION.

At different stages of the discussion, the following sentiments were uttered by the individuals to whom they are respectively attributed.

Rev. Mr. PARKER, of Roxbury. The first mention of a Sabbath was in the time of Moses. There was so much of the religious spirit among the old patriarchs, that they had no need of a Sabbath. Moses instituted the Sabbath because the Jews of his day were disposed to overwork themselves and their slaves. And when he accompanied this and his other institutions with a "Thus saith the Lord," it was only as their political head, and for the sake of giving them more effect. The meaning was nothing more than this,— "Be it enacted." It was not that God spoke it in so many words to him. Moses professed to receive directly from God, what he really received, like other wise men, indirectly.

Gentlemen seem to be in favor of lumping all the books of Scripture together, as if they all taught the same thing. But it is not so. The single book of Isaiah, for instance, which purports to have been written by one person, was unquestionably composed by several writers. In the first chapter of it some things are said of the Sabbath, as if it were not altogether very agreeable to the Lord. But from the fortieth chapter onward, it was obviously written by some one who honored the Sabbath.

Mr. P. made a variety of statements, which showed,



as he said, that in fixing upon and observing the first day of the week as Sunday, the early Christians did it arbitrarily, and as a civil institution merely — an institution called for by the general wants of society, and therefore, on the ground of a sound expediency, entitled to general observance. In this view of it, he said, I would still cling to the Christian Sunday, if it were only for the oxen and the horses. I would be the last to give it up. At the same time, I would have it observed according to liberal and enlightened views. There are some here who would have no book but a religious one read on the Sabbath — who would allow of no conversation but religious, &c.; but such an observance is alien to the spirit of Christianity. It savors, I will not say of Judaism, but it does savor of Pharisaic superstition. I would have it a day for religious instruction and worship, to be sure, and also a day for social visits, and for the leisure and refreshing walk in the fields.\*

\* This same Mr. Parker uttered the following sentiments in the Union Convention, at Groton, on the 12th of August last. The extracts are taken from a report of his speech, made by Mrs. M. W. Chapman, and published in the Church Reformer, No. 3. The subject before the Convention was sectarianism. Mr. Parker said, Peter, “misunderstanding the Old Testament, with right *Jewish narrowness*, (!) declares, ‘there is no other name’ (meaning Christ’s,) ‘given under heaven, whereby men can be saved.’ \* \* \* There was *sectarianism* in the New Testament; sectarianism among the *very apostles* whom my friends appeal to as infallible. \* \* \* It yet remains for us to apply good sense to religion; when this is done, it will be of very little importance, what a man thinks of the Old Testament or the New Testament, so long as he loves man as himself, and God above all. Then the difference between the creeds of Hopkins and Edwards, the

W. L. GARRISON. But we are pointed to France. Yes, look at France. This is capital stock for the priesthood! But what made the infidelity of France? The false and spurious Christianity they had. \* \* \* And what is France now? The Sabbath is as much unknown there now as ever. It is a day of universal indulgence and profanation. They have no more of a Sabbath really now than in the days of the revolution. But do we hear any lamentations about the horrible state of France now? And what is the reason? They've got the priesthood again, and the church again, and they will have their Jacobinism again. That Jacobinism was the legitimate fruit of their false Christianity; and as long as we have the priesthood and the church imposed on us here, it will, in the end, be just so here. We shall be obliged to have a Sabbath once a week, "to make us feel so peculiarly pious." The community will "keep going on six days of the week, cheating their neighbors, (honestly, in trade, to be sure,) and then have their Sabbath to get them right again." But *our* doctrine is, that men are to be holy every where, and at all times; that Holiness to the Lord is to be written on every thing; and that men need not always be in bondage to sin, and to days and seasons, and forms and ceremonies. No, thank the Lord, it is not death, but Christ who is the Savior of men, &c. — And,

dogmas about the miracles, the ascension, the resurrection even, and the inspiration of the apostles, will be subjects of speculation for the curious, but which have as little to do with our religion, as a farthing candle has with the shining of the noon-day sun." — Now, what is all this but deism, under the name and in the phraseology of Christianity?

(in another connection,)—"Whoever has Christ within him won't need a particular day to get religion in."

Again—Christ came to deliver us from the burden of rites, and forms, and holy days; but if he has only changed the day of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first, he has not relieved us at all. The burden remains just as before.

Again—The standard of morality under the gospel dispensation is infinitely higher than it was under the old.

Again,—commenting on Gen. ii. 2, 3,—It is assumed here that God was just six days in making the world, which is not quite so obvious. Geology, I believe, has pretty thoroughly proved that it could not be so. Besides, according to the Bible itself, it does not appear that the sun was made until the fourth day. Of course, there could not have been regular days before that. And moreover, in Gen. ii. 4, the term "day" includes the whole six previously named. There cannot be a doubt, then, that it denotes here, as it does in other parts of the Bible, a long and indefinite period.

Again, commenting on Lev. xix. 30, "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary," he said, Where is the sanctuary they were commanded to reverence? It was destroyed with Jerusalem. And since then, God is to be worshipped in Spirit. For myself, I have no reverence for wood and mortar. The only sanctuary I need is Christ. Christ was in constant trouble with the scribes and the Pharisees because he was a Sabbath-breaker. And it is just so in these days with us. The Jewish priests are continually crying

out against us as Sabbath-breakers, &c. — The Sabbath is not necessary for man or beast. Who says it is, but the overworker of himself and beast? But men have no right or any need now to overwork themselves or their beasts. In the Christian dispensation, we are to be redeemed from the curse, “in the sweat of thy brow,” &c. Christ gives us all our time; and if we make proper use of it, we shan’t need one day in seven to rest. We can live without so much labor. Machinery is to do it for us. The spiritual is to have command of the material world, and man is to be fully redeemed. — I did not say that the clergy preach directly, that if men will keep the Sabbath, they may do as they please on other days. No, they, for the most part, preach truth in the abstract, but practically they fellowship unrighteousness. Whatever they may preach, they are, in fact, *the deadliest enemies of holiness, as a body, in the land.*

A. BRONSON ALCOTT. I do not feel called upon to worship as other people do. I go into our churches, but I don’t find there what I want — must I continue to go? If I incline to worship one day or two days of the week, or all days, what is that to others, so long as I am sincere? If I dance when I worship, as one religious sect does, if I do it sincerely, it is true worship. If I labor, but not for lucre, that is worship. Labor is a ritual. Labor is divine.

I have an objection to the Sabbath as now conducted. What are the facts? We leave our homes, those sacred institutions, and go with our families to the church. And this takes up nearly all the time, so that our families are left without instruction at home. But I believe that the family is the church,

that the parent is the priest, and that the children are the audience. And until the church and state are organized around the family, there can be no permanent improvement of society. Instead of going to the churches on the Sabbath, I would have our families remain at home, and have the parents spend their time in teaching their own children. And I would have the parent a prophet — teaching by inspiration. Wheresoever there is a pure and holy soul, there is, or may be, inspiration. It is the conscience that is a "Thus saith the Lord." And when a man disobeys this ever-present Deity within him, he is rebuked. If pure and holy, *we* are lawgivers. A pure life recorded is sacred scripture. An impure life recorded is profane scripture. If a person should rise here and say, I am as much inspired as Jesus was, almost all would say, What arrogance! what profane and blasphemous words he utters! He claims to be equal to Jesus Christ. But for a man to be a Christian, is to be in degree and kind what Jesus was. It is to believe that he is inspired as Jesus was, and holy as Jesus was, and divine as Jesus was. It is not in printed documents, (referring to the Bible,) old, ghastly, cadaverous, that put us all to sleep, that inspiration dwells. Do you say that that is preaching, because the preacher opens a certain book and takes a text? No, we should all be priests as Jesus was. We should be inspired as he was. The theological school is not there, or there. The medical school is not there, or there. But the instructor is here. It is within our own breast. Let us, then, revere our own conscience, and not commit the unpardonable sin of not revering the Deity within us.



N. H. WHITING. As I said before, I shall go for argument, on this question, wherever I please. If others are disposed to dig up the musty records of former times, (referring to the arguments drawn by myself and others from the Bible,) they can do so; I shall not. Or if any one is disposed to waste his life in deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphics in relation to it, he can; I shall not. I go against the Sabbath as false in philosophy, as false in physiology, and false in morals and religion. We are told, that God rested on the seventh day, and therefore we are to rest. I don't find any such command. It seems to be supposed by some that a truth between the lids of the Bible has more authority than if it were found any where else. But if a child gives me truth, I receive it as of equal authority. It makes no difference with me where I find it. I regard every truth as a revelation from God, come from what source it may. If the devil should say to me that two and two are four, I should receive it as truth. And so with any other truth. I care not where I find it. I don't see the command for a Sabbath any where. It isn't palpable to my mind in nature. Men need rest, it is true, but they need it when they are tired, not one day in seven. The fact that man is overworked in the present state of society, is no argument, because society is now all wrong. What is the Christianity of the present day? It is a speculating Christianity. It is a trading Christianity—a cheating Christianity. It compels the laborer to toil on to support the idler, who feeds like a vampire on him. Such a Christianity, I admit, needs a Sabbath. Suppose you should convert the world to the Christianity of the

present day,—what good would it do? You would have the same bloated wealth, and the same starving, wretched poverty, by its side, that you have now. (Some one, “True!”) The first step you have got to take, if you mean to effect any real and permanent reform, is to *strike at the foundations of society as at present existing*. Society, as now existing, is but one grand system of slavery, of which that at the south is only a more palpable form. (Mr. Garrison, “True! true!”) It has been said that the opposers of the Sabbath are generally among the most dishonest, vicious, and wicked of the community. I venture the assertion, that when this great question of the Sabbath, which is the centre and cement of society, as it is, comes to be fairly agitated, you will find that the robber and the slaveholder, &c., will hold on to it to the last, (Mr. Garrison, “Hear! hear! hear!”) and be the loudest in its defence. The Sabbath, in a correct state of society, is not needed by man, either morally, religiously, as a day of rest from overtoil, or for any good purpose whatever, though it is necessary, I admit, for the system of society under which men are crushed, killed, and murdered. The morality of the heathen world is in many cases above that of the Christian world. I should say that Christian society, as at present constituted, is one great system of fraud, corruption, and murder; and the Sabbath is one part of this system, and absolutely necessary to its continuance and support.

## REMARKS.

In the foregoing sketch the reader has a fair illustration of the belief and spirit of those who were chiefly instrumental in calling and directing the Convention, and who were among the foremost in assailing the Sabbath, and its kindred institutions, the church and the ministry. Several of the public prints have spoken of the Convention as designed to overthrow those institutions, and leave us no Sabbath, no church, and no ministry. Mr. Garrison (*Liberator*, Dec. 18, 1840) complains of this, and says of the articles generally, "They are replete with defamation, with ridicule, with consternation, with falsehood, with ribaldry. The object of the late Convention was *not* to oppose the church, the ministry, or the Sabbath, *as based upon the gospel of Christ*; but EXACTLY THE REVERSE." And does Mr. G. suppose that an intelligent community are to be deceived by such pretences? The object of the Convention was to *advocate* these institutions, "as based upon the gospel of Christ." Indeed! And what was the Sabbath so advocated? Why, that all days were alike, and that "whoever (see p. 21) has Christ within him, won't need a particular day to get religion in;" i. e. it was a Sabbath which left no Sabbath, as distinct from ordinary days. And what was the ministry, so devoutly advocated? Why, that "there is a royal priesthood, and it is *all* those who believe." In other terms, there is no ministry, as such. Christians are all priests; and besides this, there is no priesthood — no ministry at all. And yet the object of the Convention was to

advocate the ministry, &c., "as based upon the gospel of Christ"! Was ever pretence more disingenuous or dishonest? Abner Kneeland's disclaimer of atheism alone can match it. Mr. Kneeland is an atheist, said the people. Not at all, said Mr. Kneeland — nothing can be farther from the truth. I believe in the being of God, as devoutly as the devoutest of you — only, you will understand, my God is *all nature*! And so, in the pretended belief of a pantheistic god, he covered up his belief in no god, and sought to do away belief in the true one. The trick was worthy of the occasion and the man, and is equalled only by that, which, under the pretence of advocating the Sabbath, the ministry, and the church, really seeks (vain work!) to abolish them.

Again — some of the public prints have spoken of the Convention as infidel in its character and tendencies, if not in its designs. Mr. Colver, indeed, in writing to some friend in England, has termed it "an infidel Convention." Others have spoken of it in the same way. All such representations Mr. Garrison pronounces unqualifiedly false. Of the statement of Mr. Colver, he says, (Lib., Jan. 29, 1841,) "Every word, every syllable, in this sentence, is untrue. No such Convention has been held;" and subsequently, "*Not an infidel spoke in the meeting.*" More than this, he says, (Lib., Dec. 18, 1840,) "that all who spoke in opposition to the popular views of the first day of the week, insisted upon the duty of all men to perfect themselves in righteousness, to consecrate their time, talents, and means, to the service of the living God, *and to be holy and without blemish.* And yet they are denounced as infidels."

These are important statements. In connection with the proceedings of the Convention, they enable us to learn, what Mr. Garrison and those who agree with him, have never yet dared to tell the public, viz. *what they mean by infidelity*; and, therefore, what they mean when they disclaim it, and cry, Persecution! if charged with it. Among all the disclaimers on this subject, when or where have they told the public what they mean by infidelity? The Convention was not infidel, they say. Yet it deliberately rejected the Bible as its only authoritative rule of faith and duty. It thus declared in terms, that it did not meet as an assembly of *Christians*, with the Bible for their rule, but as an assembly of *men*, untrammelled by such rule. *And for this William Lloyd Garrison voted.* True, he said he took his stand upon the Bible, and that he held no argument touching the Sabbath, &c., with those who denied the Bible. Yet, when called upon, by Mr. Himes's resolution, to say in what *sense* he stood upon it, and what he *meant* by those who denied it, he voted the Bible down, as the only *authoritative* rule of faith and duty, and so declared, that such as Whiting, Alcott, Parker, &c., were not, in his view, deniers of it. And is it so, that a man, or body of men, may reject the Bible, as above, and yet not be infidel? Then is not deism infidelity; then is there no such thing as an infidel Convention, short of a convention of blank atheists. The truth is, reject the Bible as above, and, aware of it or not, you have passed the dividing line between the Christian and the infidel; as to any final and authoritative rule of faith, you are an infidel. How can it be otherwise? Where else can you draw the dividing line? The deist, the pantheist, Abner



Kneeland even, *consult* the Bible, and, where its teachings concur with their "own convictions," receive them as true, just as do Whiting and Alcott, and others of that class. How is it, that the one are infidel, and the other not? Yet the Convention, we are told, was not infidel, nor did an infidel address it! What! did not men speak there, who sneered at the Scriptures, as "musty records;" who placed them on a level with the scriptures of the pagans; who held them inferior in authority to our "own convictions;" who esteemed them "a contradiction;" and who even gloried in receiving truth from the lips of a child, or the devil, with as great deference as from them? Yet, Mr. Garrison being judge, "*not an infidel spoke in the meeting.*" The Christian public will, hereafter, know how to estimate these disclaimers of infidelity.

And so of the plea, that those who spoke against the popular views, urged the duty of being "holy and without blemish." True, they did, and yet in the same breath, set the Bible unceremoniously aside, and exalted each man's "own convictions" above it, as the *standard* of holiness! But what is such holiness? And what is such religion? It may assume the name of Christianity. It may clothe itself with some of its features. Its disciples may think they are doing God service in its promulgation. But all this does not change its nature. Call it what you will, and be its form and the motives of its disciples what they may, the *nature of the thing* remains the same. What is that nature? What is *that thing*, which discards the Bible as our rule of duty and the standard of holiness; which substitutes obedience to our "own convictions" in the place of Christ, as the ground of acceptance

with God ; and which, having thus eaten out the *vitals* of Christianity, sweeps away, at a blow, those institutions and ordinances that give it *visibility and permanency*? *That thing*, which swept away the *vitals* and the *visibility* of Christianity in other days, *was infidelity*. What is that thing, which now seeks, in other forms, if you will, to do the same? It calls itself Christianity—a higher and purer form of it. Such, in the belief of some of its advocates, it doubtless is. But is it so in fact? Or is it the *old thing*, under a *new name*? Name it what you will, yet wherein does the thing itself, in its best form, differ from pure deism? In what one fundamental element are they unlike? If the one sets aside the Bible, and robs Christianity of her distinguishing *doctrines*, and so saps her *foundations*, so does the other. If the one sweeps away all that is peculiar in her *institutions and ordinances*, and so sweeps away her *visibility*, so does the other. Both equally rob Christianity of her distinctive doctrines and her distinctive institutions. Both leave her nothing of doctrine or of institution, to distinguish her from pure deism, or, indeed, from Pantheistic and Transcendental Atheism, itself. Both, in fundamental elements, ARE THE SAME ; AND LET HIM THAT DENIES IT DRAW THE LINE OF DISTINCTION, IF HE CAN.

Indeed, while Mr. Garrison, (Lib., Jan. 29, 1841,) says, "The result of the Convention led me to give thanks to God, and greatly to rejoice in spirit, because I believed that the truth as it is in Jesus was signally promoted by it," Abner Kneeland's infidel Investigator, of this city, (Dec. 2, 1840,) also exclaims, in reference to the same, "The cry is up—the race is well

begun — men begin to see the fallacy of priestcraft, the absurdity of doctrinal preaching, temple worship, and *the reign of good sense* is at hand. A Convention, &c., has just closed its sessions in this city. And the result is *most encouraging to the friends of human rights*. It is a monument of the vincibility of prejudice, and *the triumph of plain truth*." Thus, from some cause, the self-styled "friends of universal reform," and avowed infidels, are animated by kindred emotions in view of the result. Both exult in it, as the triumph of truth! Whence this oneness of sympathy and feeling? Has Infidelity mistaken herself, that she and "the truth as it is in Jesus" go thus lovingly together? Or does she see, and truly, too, in *such* truth, her *real self* — the *old thing*, under a *new name*?

And will it now be said that this is judging the reformers too harshly; that they indeed resent the idea of being infidel in their principles; that they place an exalted estimate on the character and teachings of Christ, and are in fact zealous for Christianity itself? So were many of the deists and infidels of other days. ROUSSEAU said, "If the life and death of Socrates are those of a philosopher, the life and death of Jesus Christ are those of a God." GIBBON does not "deny the truth of Christianity." Nay, he speaks of it as "the divine revelation," and avers that its early success was "owing to the convincing evidence of the doctrine itself, and to the ruling providence of its great author." \* SHAFTESBURY used to declare himself "a very orthodox believer," insisting "that he faithfully embraced the holy mysteries of our religion, notwith-

\* Priestley's Church History, vol. vi. p. 366, and Gibbon's History, vol. i. p. 536.

standing their amazing depth ;” and he actually finds fault with those who “ represent not only the institution of preaching, but the gospel itself, and our holy religion, to be a fraud.” \* COLLINS (Letter to Dr. Rogers, p. 112) represents the cause in which he is engaged as “ the cause of virtue, learning, truth, God, religion, and *Christianity*.” BOLINGBROKE says, “ *Genuine Christianity* is contained in the gospel. It is the word of God. It requires, therefore, our veneration and strict conformity to it.” He speaks even of his “ *zeal for Christianity*.” † WOOLSTON declares “ that he writes, not for the service of infidelity, which has no place in his heart, but for the honor of the holy Jesus, and *in defence of Christianity*.” He concludes several of his discourses by declaring, that his “ design is, the advancement of the truth, and of the Messiahship of the holy Jesus, to whom be glory forever, Amen.” ‡ And CHUBB, one of the most prominent of the deistical writers of his time, actually entitles one of his tracts, “ *The true Gospel of Christ asserted*.” It is no new thing, then, for *deism* to imagine itself, or to pretend to be, Christianity ; and so doing, to represent the charge of infidelity, and claim for itself the character and the honor of being but a purer and better form of Christianity, or, rather, original Christianity herself. Time will show whether such be the fact with certain “ friends of universal reform,” in these days. Thus far, it would seem to be so. Further developments will, doubtless, decide the question.

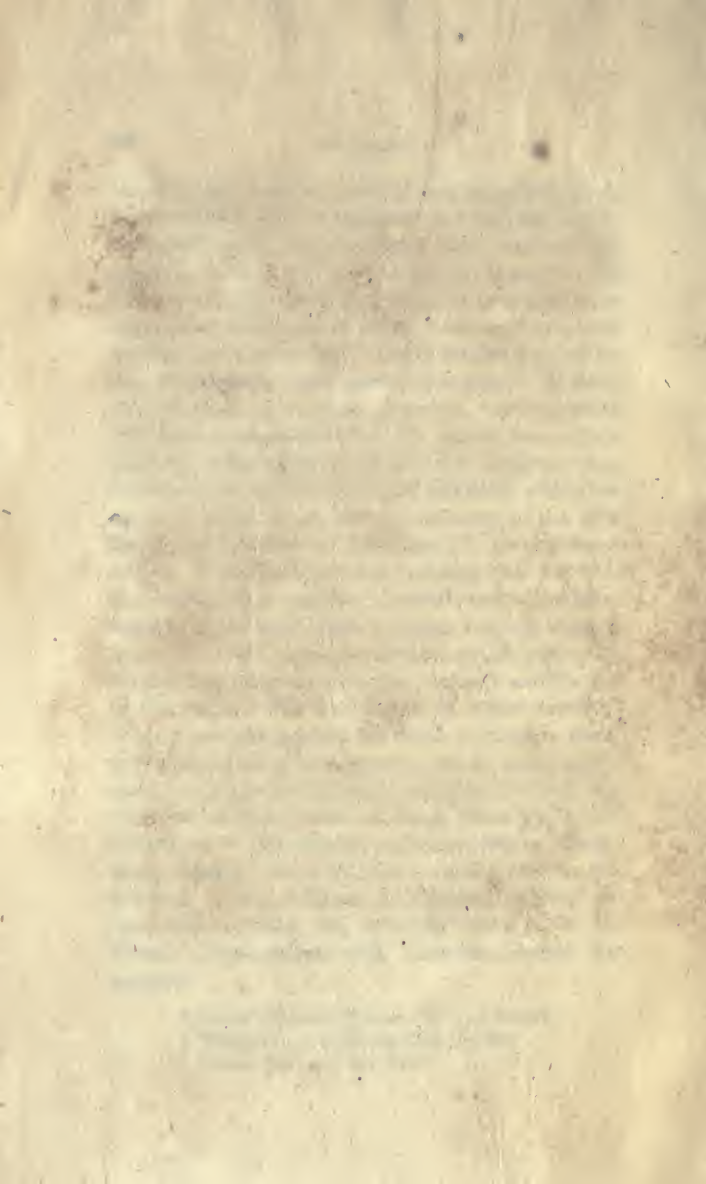
\* Leland’s Deistical Writers, vol. i. pp. 54—62.

† Works, vol. iv. p. 631, and vol. i. p. 182.

‡ Leland, vol. i. pp. 114, 115.









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